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NOTES AND COMMENTS

The Madras Society for the Protection of Children

It is satisfactory to find from the Report of the 14th Annual Meeting of the above Society that increased interest and liberality have been shown during the past year by the Madras public for the upkeep of the Children's Society. The balance sheet showed that Rs. 2,000 more than were subscribed in the previous year, were contributed this year. The Corporation has not fully done its duty towards the Alms House for helpless children in the city but the Minister for Local Self-Government who presided at the meeting, said that the needs of the country required many more Homes of the kind and it was the duty of the Corporation to give more funds to the Society. The Government has issued a communication regarding the improvement of Children's Homes and hopes that the Legislative Council will allot funds for the purpose. We wonder when more Legislators will fully realise that their first duty is the preservation of the children who are the foundation of New India. In the past, children's needs received very scant consideration and the attention that is paid to them now is, from the women's point of view, entirely inadequate, even though it is improving.

Women Municipal Councillors

Karachi is to be congratulated on its just and progressive spirit in having removed the disqualification of sex which prevented women from entering their Corporation. At a special general meeting of the Karachi Municipality, the following resolution was proposed by Mr. Jamshed N. R. Mehta: "That in the management and conduct and business of the Municipality, the Corporation is of opinion that both sexes shall have equal status, rights, and privileges". The resolution was carried with only one dissentient. We hope some Karachi lady will stand as a candidate in the next election. We notice that in a new Bill to amend the Bombay Municipal Act, regulations are included to remove the disqualification of women from be coming Councillors. Step by step, women in India are having opportunities for public service opened to them.

The Editor

Mrs. Jinarajadasa is going away on the 18th of this month to Australia. She will only be absent for about four months. She has been suffering from fever a good deal lately and a few months in a cool climate have been recommended. Our summer here in India is the winter of Australia so that it will be quite cold weather there. The work will be carried on as usual during her absence by Mrs. Cousins.

A Woman's University for Calcutta

A Working Committee has been formed under the presidency of Sir Ashutosh Chaudhuri to organise a Woman's University for Calcutta. In the explanatory circular issued by the Committee opinions are invited regarding the best way of organising a new type of education for the following classes of pupils:

1. Elementary education for the majority of Bengali girls who neither require professional training nor want to pass any examination, but who only require a general culture and training in domestic duties.

2. Zenana education for married girls and grown up women who are not permitted by social customs, or have not the time, to attend schools or colleges.

3. Vocational education and homes for helpless widows, abandoned wives and unmarried girls, who, for want of proper education and professional training, have to depend on the mercy of their relatives for support, or are driven to maintain themselves by undesirable means, but who might, if given the opportunity, support themselves honourably or supplement the income of their families by their earnings in these days of economic strain.

Believing that it is necessary to supplement the existing system of school and college education for girls it will be the aim of this University to infuse into women

> the best elements of Western culture (through knowledge of pure and applied science and useful arts), to develop in them at the same time our ancient spirituality and the highest ideal of Indian womanhood and to save their time, energy and health from the ravages of the present system of examination and to impart knowledge through the vernacular.

Help for Indian Women in Fiji

The first Dispensary for women and children has been opened at Suva, in Fiji, under the charge of Dr. Mildred Staley who will visit it on certain days. Associated with her is a certificated Indian nurse who is a fully trained dispensary nurse, anaesthetist and midwife. The Government has given the funds for adapting and furnishing a suitable building. Dr. Staley is an Australian who went to Fiji in connection with the Australian Women's Committee which has done so much to investigate into and improve the conditions of Indian women in Fiji.

Infantile Mortality

The public was shocked beyond words to read the statement of a member of the Bombay Legislative Council that 800 babies die out of every 1.000 each year in Bombay. Though this statement was explained later in such a way as reduced the number, yet the waste of child life under 5 years of age born in that city is appallingly great. Actually 7,000 out of the total 19,000 children born there annually die before they are 5 years old. Other countries have grappled with this problem and solved it satisfactorily. In England now only about 60 babies out of every 1,000 die whereas the average in India is at least 350. Lady Chelmsford's All-India Maternity and Child Welfare League was started to improve this unhappy state of Indian babies and mothers but the Report, at its last Annual Meeting, showed that it was crippled by want of funds, as the financial response from the public has been most disappointing and inadequate. Baby Welfare Centres and a radical change in the custom of making mothers of those who are still themselves children are the hopes for the future that seem to promise most result. The person who saves the life of an infant is as worthy a recipient of the Humane Society's valued medals as is the person who rescues an adult from drowning, but we never hear of any one being awarded such recognition of services to babies!

Devadasis

In the last session of the Indian Legislative Assembly Dr Gour moved a Resolution asking the Government to enact a law prohibiting the wholesale traffic in minor girls for immoral purposes ostensibly intended as Devadasis, but in reality used for indiscriminate immoral purposes. Mr T. Rangachariar moved an amendment for referring the whole question to Local Governments and public bodies. We are glad that the amendment was defeated and the original Resolution was carried by a large majority. It cannot be denied that a law abolishing the system of Devadasis in temples would not eradicate the evil of prostitution or even materially minimise its prevalence, but it would be an excellent measure by itself and to that extent would discourage prostitution under the auspices of temples.

The Assembly also agreed to the introduction of a Bill by Mr. Sohanlal to raise the age of consent in case of rape of the girl concerned from twelve to fourteen years. In England the age of consent is 16 and it grieves one to think of the suffering and in many cases permanent injury that is being endured by these helpless children of 12. We think it is a step in the right divection that the Bill as drafted would mean that a husband, if he had intercourse with his wife before the age of 14, even with her consent, would be severely punished. The Members of the Legislative Assembly are using their powers very helpfully for the protection of women and children. We trust these Bills will become law very soon.

Madras Arts and Crafts Exhibition

Women ought to make a special point of visiting exhibitions of arts and crafts, as they will get countless hints from them regarding the proper arrangements of their homes. The refined choice of Indian pictures, the proper method of hanging them, new ornaments for house and person wrought by Indian craft workers, the best designs in sarees, shawls, carpets, curtains, mats, and upholstering materials are all to be found there and studied with benefit. An Exhibition such as that which has been in Madras must make every woman visitor proud of her country for its power of creating beauty, and will inspire her to demand Indian arts and crafts primarily for both the necessities and luxuries of her household.

Women's Legislative Rights in Travancore

(Reprinted from the Mahila, the Malayalam Women's Magazine)

It is with immense pleasure that we notice that women have been allowed to stand as candidates for the Legislative Council in Travancore. It is to establish rights such as this that the women of British India are actively fighting and what Travancore women have got now is only something which their sisters in British India hope to enjoy in the near future. That Travancore is far in advance of British India in the matter of female education is a fact which is admitted by all. But even tho Degree holders among our women do not evince much interest in National affairs and we have not heard of any who has taken pains to study even the elements of politics. The national awakening, which is to be found in the women of British India, who have the misfortune to be at the lowest rung of the ladder with regard to education, is completely absent in Travancore, which is comparatively more enlightened. Directly after taking their degree, our women take to Government service and as a matter of course, they even cease to think about national or social questions. Under these circumstances we think it is useless to hope that in the near future there will be found in the ranks of the cultured degree holders suitable candidates for our Legislative Councils. By this we do not mean to suggest that only those who have a degree to their credit are suitable for this purpose. Only, if, in spite of our much vaunted advance in female education we do not find suitable persons to take advantage of the boon conferred upon us by our beloved sovereign, we will have to face the opprobrium of the civilised world. It is almost certain that women will not be as ready as men to enter the electoral lists and get themselves elected. And, therefore, we wish that when nominations are made by Government, our claims also will be recognised and that at least one woman will be included in the official and unofficial lists.

LAKSHMI AND MEENAKSHI IN THE HOME

By DOROTHY JINARAJADASA

In every town and village of India, the centre of the life of the community is the Temple, whether it be the great edifice with stately court-yards and massive richly-carved gopurams, with dim aisles leading to the mystic inner shrine, or whether it be the little village place of worship with its one chamber and porch and undecorated simplicity. Be it magnificent, or be it simple, everywhere alike the Temple is the heart of the people, and in the Temple the focus of their daily aspiration and religious devotion is the image that is the symbol to each man and woman, in greater or lesser degree, of Divinity. And in these shrines one great fact is ever silenly proclaimed, the indivisibility of God; neither mannor woman is He, but, transcending all sex, He is neither and both. Ever with Siva's image is seen that of his consort Meenakshi, ever with Vishnu that of Lakshmi. The feminine and the masculine are one and equal. Such was the teaching of Hinduism in the long ago days; and following up the history of India one reads how far-reaching in old times was the influence of woman in the life of the nation in all departments and spheres, political and religious as well as in the management and well-being of the family. We cannot read an article to-day written for women, we cannot hear a lecture delivered to women, without being told of the glories of Sita, Damayanti, Maitreyi, Gargi and numerous others. Just homage is rendered to them, and their praises are sung and their sayings and deeds treasured.

So a stranger coming into India would say, seeing and hearing these things: "Surely India is an example to the world; man and woman are equal; the Gods and Goddesses are alike worshipped; great woman played their part in the early days of Ancient India, in building up the greatness and glories of the Indian civilisation. Behold! I will go forth, up and down the land, and learn of these enlightened people, who knew of God's Truth of the equality of men and women when we, in the West, were savages!"

We will not further follow our simple stranger in his tour of disillusionment, but will briefly gather up the results of his enquiries and consider what we find regarding the position of women in India to-day. We can begin with a note of congratulation on the great awakening that has come to the women of India. To one who has closely followed all the movements towards reform and progress for the last ten years, the most striking change is that evident in the growing interest taken in such things by women, and in the much greater part they play in all activities of this kind. Wemen are on Committees, women attend Congresses, political meetings, Councils and public functions; they organise themselves and discuss the reforms that they need. We can feel satisfaction and congratulate ourselves but just a little bit only, because while we are thinking how progressive we are, we must also realise how very far we have yet to go; how very few women in our towns are able or even permitted to go to outside functions, how few women can go to a meeting, because they are interested and wish to go, without saying, "I must ask my husband". We worship Sarasvati, the Goddess of Wisdom, but we do not trust our Sarasvati in the home to have the wisdom to decide for herself what she wants to know and where she wishes to go.

We need to-day to consider our words in the clear penetrating light of Truth and Sincerity. For how often we hear talk of women being Goddesses, on a pedestal too high for them to descend into the dirt of everyday affairs, of a purity too translucent for them to be soiled by contact with politics, social reform and such like realities. But these Goddesses need not be educated, their minds, given to them by God and potentially equal to the mind provided to a man, need not be developed, their faculties need not be trained. To be a good cook is the chief accomplishment asked for by the vast majority of husbands. Even for the all important vocation of Motherhood, the little child Mother enters upon her responsibilities with no knowledge of baby welfare, and small idea how to care either for herself or the young life depending on her. The terrible result of this ignorance is seen in the enormous death rate among babies in India. In Madras City *forty* out of every hundred born die while under one year old. In a town in New Zealand *four* babies die out of a hundred born. This is not because New Zealand mothers and fathers love their babies more than Indian fathers and mothers, but because every New Zealand mother is a woman, not a child, when her baby is born, and she also knows how to care for it and to bring it safely through the little ailments of childhood; she understands the need of absolute cleanliness and sanitation in all that has to do with birth; and so her baby lives and grows and thrives.

Not one man would dream of casting his son out into the world without any training for the profession he is to follow. No boy is born an instinctive vakil or doctor or engineer, he needs long and careful training to enter these professions. A baby is a much more complicated piece of mechanism than an engine or a law case, and yet a young girl is supposed successfully to care for a baby without any training for the great trust. So forty per cent die. If a boy who had never driven a motor-car were to drive it through a main bazaar street he too might through ignorance kill forty per cent. The men of India must wake up to the waste of life that is going on everywhere in every town and village, owing to the lack of knowledge of the women, and of themselves also.

We can go about and see a few women taking part in the progressive movements of the day, but the life of the Womanhood of India is not represented by these few. It is in the home that we must look to see what progress is being made. The women of to-day are not educated as were their ancestors of long ago. The ancient education and training and

knowledge of the women has gone, and it has not been replaced by the education and modern acquirements of this day.

We are living in an age when there is too much glorifying of ourselves by what our ancestors (not we ourselves) were in the long past. To come back to where we began, this former glory is what women are being overpowered by to-day. We need to contemplate less the wonder and splendour and great deeds of the long ago Sarasvati, Meenakshi, and Sita, and to think very hard about the young Lakshmi and Meenakshi in our home. She has a mind, a desire for knowledge, aspirations after service to her country, a desire to know and understand the developments in India to-day. More too she has, as a human soul, a *right* to education, and to have every opportunity to expand her mind and extend her faculties. India can never be a great country until this right is recognised and granted. India with a very large proportion of her women in seclusion and a larger proportion without education cannot be called a great, mighty Nation, because a Nation consists of men and women co-operating together for the good and development of their country; and so long as in India the women are not in very deed and truth, not merely by word, recognised as the equals and partners of men, India cannot be a great Nation, she is only half a Nation, incomplete, making the mistakes that an incomplete entity must necessarily make. May India soon realise what she is losing by not eagerly inviting the help of her womanhood, without whom she can only be one-sided, imperfect and unfulfilled.

The Artist

I love all beauteous things
    I seek and adore them
God hath no better praise,
    And man in his hasty days
Is honoured for them.

I too will something make
    And joy in the making;
Altho' to-morrow it seem
    Like the empty words of a dream
Remembered on waking.

ROBERT BRIDGES,
(*Poet Laureate.*)

SNAPSHOTS

The Life of Burmese Women

BY MARGARET E. COUSINS, B. MUS

Rangoon:—They came tripping along the busy street attracting me by the smiling interchange of their merry conversation which seemed to be echoed by their fluttering pink silk scarves and their pattering sandals. This pair of Burmese girls seemed as careless and thoughtless as butterflies when suddenly on passing the steps leading up to the pagoda they dropped on their knees on the crowded footpath and there beside the pagoda railing interrupted their careless chattering by an act of sweet and simple prayer of devotion to the Buddha typical of their whole race. As devoid of self-consciousness or sex-consciousness as the flowers they carried were they as they rose and flitted onwards again.

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She sat beside me on a cosy couch in a Burmese drawing-room. Her jet-black hair was arranged high on the head in a stiff circlet like a crown from the side of which dropped bell-like small pink and white flowers placed there with inimitable grace, giving quaint piquancy to the rest of the dainty young figure. "Will you come with me to the horse races to-morrow?" she asked me in perfect English. "Oh, I had hoped you would have come to our ladies' meeting then," I replied. "My horses will be running, I must see them, I have twelve of them," she said. "And do you bet also?" I inquired. "No, but I take a great interest in the stakes, which are high here in Burma. What a pity you cannot join me." Thus I stumbled with surprise across the Burmese society women's share in the Burmese passion for racing and gambling.

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What a sweet smile she gave us as we approached her cloth-stall on a small platform outside a shop in the bazaar! "She pays only Rs. 8 per month for the use of this position," explained my Dutch friend. "She is a splendid saleswoman and always so sweet tempered". I bought a coatee from her of the kind the Burmese wear. "Swadeshi" she pointed out with the newly born pride in home manufacture that is becoming as evident in Burma as in India. I also purchased the under-camisole of the costume. Though it was elaborately made with a design nesessitating much care and stitching its cost was only one rupee! There must be "sweating," somewhere, I fear, that needs investigation. Is the great industry of Burmese women being exploited? No Burmese men-shopkeepers are to be seen, all the retail commerce of the country is in the capable hands of the women. Arithmetic is the favourite subject of the Burmese school-girl. How different from India!

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Rows of little girls, unlike any others I had ever seen, were being taught in much the same way as all other children of the world, but their teachers were essentially different because of their striking youthfulness. These have come forward voluntarily

to staff the National Education Schools which since two years ago have introduced into the curriculum the teaching of the Buddhist religion and the more extensive use of the Burmese language. Zeal for service as Educationists is noticeable among the young men and women of Burma to-day. A delightful lunch of Burmese delicacies served by these young ladies to the accompaniment of music on the Burmese harp rounded off my visit to these Girl's Schools. Young men and women teachers moved together easily and these brightly-dressed graceful girls fluttered handkerchiefs from the windows as I drove away and then shyly and quickly ran out of sight leaving me with the impression that they had done something unusually demonstrative for their custom, the dears!

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In the great Golden Pagoda (Shwe Dagon) a procession comes along slowly and with dignity. It is that of a Shan Chieftain who had come from North Burma to honour the Prince of Wales. Men and women move together, the Chieftain, his wife, sons and daughters, members of his retinue of both sexes. All are richly dressed in silks, the women's skirts heavily embroidered round the ends in silver and sequins, beautiful jewels on their necks and hands (not on their faces), yet gaudiness and ostentation are noticeably absent. The good taste of the Burmese in dress is unimpeachable. They carry flowers, candles, favours, trays of sweetmeats and fruit as offerings. The Chieftainess directs the placing of these on the shrines while the young daughters are frankly more interested in the people visiting the Pagoda and we politely exchange stares until they proceed with their devotions.

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Behold the shining Golden Pagoda on the left, carved brown wooden minarets on the right, gleaming white shrines and tall palm trees in the background and a host of grey-blue pigeons on the marble platform in the foreground in the midst of whom is a woman in a brown silk skirt, a white muslin short jacket, a brilliant yellow scarf which throws into relief the vivid black of her hair and the motions of her pretty hands as she scatters grain in the sunlight to these feathered friends of hers whose ranks are now increased by a number of crows and some cocks and hens. Thus is she practising "compassion to all creatures."

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Prome:—We are taking a walk in this Burmese town by the side of the Irrawaddy river. Pretty red flowers are in a pile under a tree and others are being thrown down. Figures are seen high up among the branches. Are they children or monkeys? We peer up,—no, they are respectable middle-class, middle-aged Burmese women! Unrestricted by convention, clothing, or incapacity, they have climbed up to get the beauty they want for the adornment of their hair. Free as the birds are the women of Burma!

Magwe:—The wooden houses of Burma are all built on a platform raised above the ground on stakes. The lower storey is unwalled and left open, the upper storey is walled in by some woven bark material in pretty design and shades of brown. As the sunset fades one sees the family groups on this upper storey verandah with heads just above its low railing, men and women and children all seated together and all except the smallest children smoking large cheroots whose glowing ends form the only light in the house for the following hour. Such is the quiet family eventide in the village.

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Mandalay:—At home, shopping, in the Pagoda, everywhere, she carries her large cheeroot, lights it now and again, smokes it gracefully, allows it to go out but still carries it for further pleasure. It may be one of those so long and thick that it lasts for three or four days. It is the most observable feature of the Burmese woman's life. Beside it the cigarette of the modern Western girl sinks into pale insignificance. But what about nicotine poisoning?

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The tall, pretty, young Burmese woman is striving to lift up her heavy basket of provisions from the shore. A well-dressed Muhamadan of middle age is about to pass her and sees her efforts. He kindly and respectfully helps her to hoist it to her head. She smiles her thanks and they proceed in opposite directions. No race antagonisms here.

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Those deep wicker and lacquer trays carry food for sale, explains my friend. Very little cooking is done in individual homes by Burmese townswomen as they leave their houses early for their business, so meals are bought ready cooked daily. This is the Burmese solution of co-operative kitchens.

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Yenangyoung:—Who are these approaching in a line one behind the other? Each wears a fawn-yellow robe, each bears an earthen-pot on the head. There is a sense of peace and aloofness about them. Only when they pass close by can one distinguish that they are women—women Buddhist nuns. They live in their own community building near the beautiful pagoda crowning the hill which juts into the river and they are wending their way down the steep bank to the river side for the evening supply of water. Thousands of such dedicated women there are in Burma, vowed to the service of the Sanga (communal order) and to the quest for illumination. Did not the Buddha say in the *Chullavedalla Sutta*, "Woman may attain the highest path of holiness that is open to man—Arhatship."

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A splash and a light laugh! I look towards the shore and there is a young woman swimming out towards our steamer. With rapid strong strokes she leaves the shore, her black hair

gleaming in the sunlight, then back again she moves till she reaches a naked small girlie. She catches her up and plays with her in the water while other bathing women and men lazily watch the pair. Having deposited the youngster on the bank, the young mother tightens her dark bathing-dress around her and out she dives again in sheer joy of water, sunshine and motion! Free as the fishes are the women of Burma. Neither in the water, in the trees, on the open roads, nor in the market place does the Burmese woman know fear, or hold suspicion against man in her thought.

INDIAN WOMEN AND CITIZENSHIP

BY CHINNAMALU AMMA

The southern provinces of India have lost no time in removing the sex disqualification from the statute book of the Legislative Councils. One could have wished that our sister provinces of the north had followed suit, but it was not to be so. However, it is only a question of time when the women of the north will gaint heir civic rights. Meanwhile, if the rebuff at the hands of our chosen representatives call out the inherent powers of organisation and self help in our sisters of Bengal and Behar, the defeat of the suffrage resolution will have been a blessing in disguise. The repression of the normal rights of a citizen ought never to silence the demand for them, but should make them irresistibly insistent.

Meanwhile the partisanship of woman in public life—or rather the recognition of such a partisanship on the part of Indian men—cannot fail to influence our national life. The question henceforth must increasingly become not "what is good for our women?" but "what do our women think is good for themselves?" Nor do we think that, when once woman begins to feel the power of her personality over the affairs of State, her attention will be confined exclusively to "women's problems"—whatever people may mean by that phrase. Let once that novelty of her participation in public affairs pass away and woman will turn her attention to the leading social, economic, industrial and even international questions of the day. For there is no sphere of national life in which women have no interest. Present day social problems of early marriage, widowhood, and seclusion must increasingly engage her attention hereafter. On the successful solutions of these questions depend the life-long happiness of the future womanhood of India. On the economic questions of labour production, etc., including factory labour of women and children, she cannot afford to be silent. The intelligent Indian woman cannot feel herself indifferent with regard to the appalling death-rate of infants in India. She will feel keenly hereafter, as modern conditions of life force the labouring and middle class women more and more into outside labour, how the introduction of machinery has reacted adversely on the value of her labour. The minority of Indian women, educated enough on modern lines to feel the civic consciousness, have not read without a blush of shame and indignation the life of humiliation of their compatriots in the English colonies. Nor in the coming days of international organisations, will stateswomen fritter away precious time and intellectual energy in fruitless recrimination and hairsplitting while nations, civilisations, and human virtue go to the dogs.

Here in India, the position of woman is unique. Nourished in seclusion, but not in helpless parasitism (as strangers seem to think), she has cherished in her heart all that is most lovable and truthful in the ancient ideals of our land. If religion is not to be ignored in the future social, economic, and political progress of India her womanhood will have to come forward and impress its deathless constancy to ideals on the national life. Nor does woman's duty end there. Her higher intuitional powers will make her come to conclusions without the circuitous path of reasoning, and so will make her an invaluable co-operator in the administrative details of her country. Her sense of responsibility will shake off from her all ideas of weakness, and as to-day many an Indian matron manages with calm self-reliance the responsibilities of a joint family household, so will the Indian women of the future calmly guide the affairs in the larger house hold of the nation by the side of her comrade, man.

The first matter which, we think, will engage the attention of an awakened womanhood is the improvement of her educational efficiency. Woman's education has to be as extensive as possible and, where individual abilities permit it, intensive too. We mean that no woman ought to be denied the opportunity of gaining all the knowledge that her capacities can acquire, simply because of her sex. In the present condition of Indian womanhood, this is fairly uphill work. Our social and domestic disabilities. will not give way all at once. The existing universities demand conditions other than intellectual efficiency, such as continuous attendance at recognised institutions none too many), which cannot possibly be fulfilled by the majority of Indian women. The utility of their curriculum is questioned even in the case of men, and can be more so in the case of women, where its saving merit of gaining a livelihood would be necessary to her only under exceptional circumstances. But the outlook is not altogether gloomy. Indeed we might say that the silver shining of our cloud is so bright that it cheers and inspires the heart to which the welfare of Indian womanhood is dear.

India does not begin her woman's movement with sex antagonism. It must have gladdened many an Indian woman's heart to see how chivalrously and quickly the grant of civic rights was made to her in our Southern Presidency. Nurtured for centuries in the ideal of divine motherhood, India has recognised the dignity of womanhood. Indeed the difficulty in the way of the progress of Indian womanhood is the excessive respect and reverence—a sort of glass-house sanctity—with which she is often invested. The very customs of purdah and

early marriage, which we deplore to-day, have their root in the ideas of the purity and sacredness of womanhood. The struggle for woman's rights in the west has had its effect on womanhood as a whole, and has for ever put aside the necessity of proving the justice or the necessity of acceding to women's civic demands. Be the reasons what they may, Indian women begin their struggle for self-expression with the full co-operation and sympathy of Indian men. Indian men may mistake the needs of their sisters, but the wish is there, sincere and earnest, to raise them to the full stature of the womanhood of other countries. No responsible party in politics or responsible public organ in India has offered opposition to women's claims, so far as I am aware. Even where woman's suffrage bills have met with defeat in Councils, the opponents based their reasons in many cases on the prematurity and inexpediency of the measure under existing social conditions. Very few have opposed the principle of civic rights for women. It rests with the women of India to utilise this cordial sympathy to the full in all schemes of wider education for Indian women. A sufficiently organised womanhood should be able to press the questions of women's education on our representatives in the Councils and on the public conscience. Only through the widening of their intellectual horizon by a liberal education on combined eastern and western ideals, can women hope to solve the questions that touch them most closely.

Marriage customs in India have always engaged the attention of social reformers. One recalls to mind Iswar Chunder Vydiasagar, Keshub Chunder Sen, D. K. Karve, V. S. Srinivasa Sastri—truly a magnificent galaxy, but how little have their enthusiastic and unselfish efforts been crowned with success! Even where they have succeeded in getting laws placed on Statute Books, Hindu Society as a whole has not been benefited by those laws. We still stick to our time-honored superstitions dignified by the name of religious sanction. We need not seek very far to know why the whole Social reform movement in India has been so tardy in its progress. Its great opponent hitherto has been the one great force that ought to have been its most powerful ally—the womanhood of India. The Social Reform movement that does not enlist the active sympathy of the womanhood of a country is doomed to failure. It is the law of nature that the best and safest remedies for evils should come from within the organism. The human body does not cease to be ill if it can be propped up into a semblance of health only by drugs. That is what we have been doing with social reformation in India. We have treated the outward symptoms of disease, but never given the body strength to resist the germs of illness. We have pursued a policy of laissez faire with regard to the root cause—the want of education of our womanhood, the education that ought to make her look on all social questions in the light of the requirements of the present day. Our interest in anything in the world is directly proportionate to the degree in which it affects us. This is human nature. And yet this elementary truth has been neglected by us too long. As long as nature makes motherhood the exclusive duty and privilege of woman, so long must all questions of reform concerning marriage, woman's education, etc, affect women more directly and to a greater degree than men. The death penalty—a yearly recurring one in India greater than that paid by most wars of History—is paid by the womanhood of India for infringement of nature's law by premature motherhood. Ignorance of the primary laws of Hygiene takes away many a young life during the trying time of child birth and confinement. It is the Divine Law that sufferings shall goad human nature to find the remedy. It cannot be that a self-reliant and enlightened womanhood will allow these 'plague' spots of social life to destroy the potential and actual mothers of the race. Woman has not pursued a policy of indifference to social questions in America, Australia, or Europe; there is no reason to suppose that she will do so in India. On the other hand one believes that the very obstinacy which has made her tenacious of the outworn forms of Society, augurs well for the future. That tenacity and constancy of aim is a mighty force; let it be yoked to the national progress. To-day the woman of India clings with all her might to the old customs and traditions because she believes they are enjoined by her religion and must be adhered to in the wider interests of Hinduism, whatever the individual's risks and sacrifices. We may differ from her, but respect we must this staunch constancy to an impersonal ideal. It is this same steadfastness and earnestness that we shall in future enlist among the forces for reform. With her clear eye fixed on the goal of social emancipation for her Motherland, the enlightened wide-awake Indian woman of the future, no less sacrificing than her ancestors of bygone days or of to-day, will work for progress, union and full national expression.

WOMEN THE WORLD OVER

Japan

Each year in Japan is named after a different animal. Last year was the monkey year, this is the chicken year, next year is to be the dog year. Next year is considerd very unlucky for marriages so this year being auspicious is seeing a great increase in them. There were 2,000 at one shrine alone in Tokyo in November and December. These are the favourite Japanese times for marriages as only in winter is dressing in full formal dress possible.

Although there is much unemployment amongst men, the demand for *women* workers in silk and other factories in Japan is greater than the supply and city officials have been asked to find women labourers and send them to Yokohama where plenty of work awaits them.

The average death-rate of infants in Japan is increasing. We are glad to see, however, that it is, even so, only one-half as high as that of India. It is 160 infants per 1,000 births, whereas it runs as high as 350 in Madras. Before the age of 20 it has been computed that 7,000 children die in Tokyo per year. This total is 9 per cent of the city's school enrolment.

The veteran woman leader of Japan, Madame Yajima, aged 90, has returned to Japan from her mission of presenting a petition for Disarmament to the President of the United States which was signed by 10,000 Japanese women. She was so impressed by the success of prohibition in America that she intends starting an agitation for it also in Japan.

China

About 500 women of the Province of Shantung have organised themselves into groups of bandits containing 50 or 60 each. Heavy fighting between them and the official troops has been reported.

Denmark

The women of Denmark are petitioning their Municipal department to increase the number of woman police. They feel such an increase is necessary both on social and humanitarian grounds as the use of women in the force for order and morals would have great significance.

France

On December 22, the Conseil General adopted unanimously the following resolution: "That women be accorded the same electoral and eligibility rights as men."

Spain

Miss Carmen Bonilla has just entered the College of Advocates in Madrid. She is the first woman in Spain to take up the career of a lawyer.

Switzerland

A number of women are now being elected to Swiss Municipal Committees connected with Boards of Guardians, School Boards, and Trade Schools.

Servia

The first Women's Club in Belgrade was opened in January. The aim of the Club is to draw women together. It is furnished with every comfort and all facilities are given for the study of intellectual, social and political questions. Lectures on various subjects are given every week and these are thrown open to the public.

England

A further recognition of women's rights in the Legislature has been made by the decision of the House of Lords' Committee that Peeresses in their own right are entitled to sit in the Upper House. The question arose over Viscountess Rhondda's petition to receive a writ summons to Parliament. Twenty-three other Peeresses are affected by the decision, and they include Princess Arthur of Connaught, the Duchess of Fife and Ladies Roberts and Wolseley.

The London Labour Party has called Mr. Lloyd George's attention to the urgent desirability of extending the franchise to *all* women on the same terms as it at present applies to men. "My Committee," says Mr. Morrison, the Secretary, "is of opinion that no serious reason exists to render inadvisable the granting of full electoral equality to women and urges the Government to delay no longer in doing this act of justice to our women citizens."

Ireland

With the establishment of the Provisional Government a fresh lease of life has come to the Irish Women's Franchise League and a deputation of women has requested the Irish Premier to receive a deputation of its members who will place before him the women's claim to have the Parliamentary vote extended to women of 21. At present only women aged over 30 are eligible to vote and the Irish women are determined to get this changed so that there may be no difference in terms between men and women voters. Great interest is being shown in this renewed agitation for the vote.

America

Women in the United States are now entitled to vote on the same terms as men. Legislation to this effect was passed as early as 1919, its operation being delayed by a dispute over the constitutionality of such a measure. Now the verdict of the Supreme Court has declared it constitutional, and the measure comes into force.

Australia

In West Australia a Bill has been introduced by the Archbishop in Council granting to women members of the Church of England the right to be elected as members of Synod (the governing body of the Church).

TAMIL

RAJA RAM MOHAN ROY

By Kamalabai, (Mrs. Lakshmana Rao).

ராஜா ராம் மோஹன்ராய்

ஸ்ரீமதி கமலாபாயால்

இன்றையதினம் இந்த சமாஜத்தின் வருஷாந்தர மஹோத்ஸவமாகையால், நாம் எல்லோரும் வெகு ஆனந்தத்துடன் இவ்விடம் கூடியிருக்கிறோம், முதன் முதலில் இச்சமாஜ தலைவராகியவர் ராஜாராம்மோஹன்ராய். இவருக்கு வந்தனமளிப்போம். அவர் செய்துவந்த அநேக சீதிருத்தங்களில், ஸ்திரீகளுக்கு "சதி" என்னும் உடன்கட்டையேறும் வழக்கத்தை நிறுத்த முயன்றதும் ஸ்திரீகள் கல்விக்காக முதன் முதலில் பாடுபட்டதும் முக்கியமானவை, என்பதை நான் இவ்விடத்தில் எடுத்துச்சொல்வது அவசியம்.

பெண்கல்விக்காக பாடுபடுதல்—இதில் என்ன விசேஷம்? என்று உங்களுக்கு தோன்றலாம், ஆனால், இவர் எந்தகாலத்தில் பிறந்தவர் என்பதை கேட்பீர்களாகில், உங்களுக்கே ஆச்சரியமுண்டாகும். இவர் 1772-ம் வருஷம், அதாவது சுமார் 150 வருஷத்திற்குமுன் பிறந்தவர். இவர் நம்மை "சிறை" யிலிருந்து வெளிவர சகாயம் செய்தவர்; ஞானமிருதத்தை ஊட்ட முயன்றவராகிய நம் தேச சகோதரர். நாம் எப்படி இவருக்கு கடமைப்பட்டிருக்கிறோமென்பதை இப்பொழுது நீங்கள் நன்கு ஆராய்வீர்கள். நாம் இந்த மஹாத்மாவுக்கு நன்றியறிதலை காட்டுவதெப்படி? அவர் ஸ்திரீகள் அபிவிர்த்திக்காகவும் தருமத்திற்காகவும் பாடுபட்டிருக்கிறார் ஆகையால்:—

"ஸ்திரீகளும் தர்ம கொள்கையும்" அல்லது, "Women and Religion" என்னும் விஷயத்தைப்பற்றி இன்று சற்று யோசித்து ஆராய்வோம்.

ஸ்திரீ, தர்மம், கொள்கை என்னும், மூன்று வார்த்தைகளில் இவ்விஷயம் அடங்கியள்ளது. இப்பொழுது, ஒரு ஸ்திரீயின் பக்குவமான வடிவமும் குணங்களுமென்ன? ஸ்திரீயின் பக்குவமான வடிவம் கண்ணுக்கினிமையாயும் பார்ப்போர் மனம் கவரத்தக்கதாயும் இருக்கும். பக்குவமான, ஸ்திரீயின் குணங்களோ தெய்வீக தன்மையானது. அதாவது தயை, தாக்ஷிண்யம், ஜீவகாருண்யம், அன்பு, ஆதரவு, பாவித்ரியம், க்ஷமை, சாந்தம் முதலியனவே; இப்பொழுது இரண்டாவதாகிய தர்மத்தின் குணங்களெவை? ஒவ்வொரு தர்ம மதமும் ஏதாவது ஒரு சிரேஷ்டமான குணத்தை பக்குவமாக்கி காட்டத்தான் உதித்தாற்போல் தோன்றுகிறது. ஆகையினாலேயே, சற்று தரும சிந்தனையுடையோருக்கு, மோஹமுண்டு பண்ணி அவர் மனதை கவரச்செய்கிறது. எந்த மதத்திலும் மேற் சொல்லிய ஸ்திரீ குணங்கள், அதாவது—தயை, க்ஷமை, தாக்ஷிண்யம், ஜீவகாருண்யம், அன்பு, ஆதரவு, பாவித்ரியம், அதாவது சுத்தம் முதலிய குணங்கள் தெளிவாக விளங்கும். ஆகையால் பக்குவமான ஸ்திரீ குணங்களும், நாகரிகமடைந்த தரும குணங்களும் ஒன்றென்பதை நீங்கள் அறியலாம். 3-வது "கொள்கை" என்னும் பதத்திற்கு ஏற்றுக்கொள்ளுதல் என்று அர்த்தமல்லவா? ஸ்திரீ என்றால் முற்சொன்ன குணங்கள்; தருமம் என்றால் 2-வது சொல்லிய குணங்கள், கொள்கை என்றால் ஞானத்தால், அல்லது புத்திநுட்பத்தால் கிரகித்தல் என்று அர்த்தம் செய்யலாம். இதனால்—ஸ்திரீகளும், தரும மதங்களும், ஒரேவிதமான குணத்தையுடையவர்களாதலால், புருஷர்களைவிட ஞானம்சம் சற்று குறைவாயிருந்தபோதிலும் ஸ்திரீகளின் தருமக்கொள்கைகள் திடமாயிருக்கலாமென்று நினைக்கிறேன். ஆனால் சிலர் இம்மாதிரியான திடமான இந்து ஸ்திரீயின் தர்மக்கொள்கையை, சில முரட்டு ஜாதியாராகிய மகம்மதியர்களுக்கு ஒப்பிட்டுச்சொல்லுகிறார்கள். ஆனால் மேல் சொல்லிய 8 குணங்களில் யாரிடத்தில் அதிக குணங்களின் தொகை காணப்படுமென்று ஒப்பிட்டு பார்த்தால் சீக்கிரமாகவே இவர்கள் பிழையை ஒப்புக்கொள்வார்கள். உலகத்தில் ஸ்திரீகளே பொதுவாய் அதிக தரும சிந்தனையுடையவர், அதிலும் இந்து ஸ்திரீகளுக்கோ இது உயிராகக்காணப்படும். இந்து ஸ்திரீகள் இப்படி தம் மதத்தை மதிப்பது மிகவும் நியாயமே. ஏனெனில் இந்து மதமானது அவ்வளவு பெரிய தத்வங்கள் அடக்கியுள்ளது. இதில் முப்பத்து முக்கோடி தேவர்களை, தொழுபவருக்கும்; முக்குணங்கள் ரஹிதமான சாக்ஷாத் ப்ரஹ்மத்தை தொழுபவருக்கும் தத்துவங்களாய் வழங்கும் பஞ்சமஹாபூதத்தை தொழுபவருக்கும், காட்டேரி முதலிய பிசாசுகளைத் தொழுபவருக்கும் இந்து மதத்தின் குடைக்கீழ் நிற்க அதிகாரமுண்டு; அப்படியே, எல்லாவித நாகரிகம் பெற்ற சாஸ்திரங்களுக்கும், இந்துமதசாஸ்திரம் ஆதி மூலமாய் காணப்படுவதையும் நீங்கள் அறிந்துகொள்ளலாம். உதாரணமாக—ப்ரொபசர் சர் ஜகதீச சந்திரபோஸ் என்பவர், செடிகள், கொடிகள் விருக்ஷங்களுக்கு உயிரும், உணர்வும் இருப்பதாக ஆராய்ந்தெடுத்துச் சொல்லியதை மேற்றிசை சாஸ்திரிகள்—அல்லது Scientists—ஒப்புக்கொண்டிருக்கிறார்களென்பது உங்களுக்கு தெரிந்த விஷயமே. ஆகையால் நம் தரும சாஸ்திரத்தைப்பற்றி நாம் அடையும் பெருமை நிராகரிக்கத்தக்கதன்று. ஆனால்—நமது பெருமை தற்காலத்தில் எப்படியிருக்கிறதென்றால் ஒரு அழகான குழந்தையின் படிப்பில்லாத தாயை ஒத்திருக்கிறது. அதாவது கற்றறியாத மூடத்தன்மையான தாய், தன் அன்பு மிகுதியால் குழந்தையின் அழகையும், முன்னுக்கு வரும் நற்குணங்களையும் தன் பெருமையையும் எப்படி கெடுத்துவிடுகிறாளோ, அதேமாதிரியாக நாம் நமது அஞ்ஞானத்தால் நமது பெருமையைக் கெடுத்துக்கொண்டதும் தவிர நமது தர்ம சாஸ்திரத்தின் அருமையான தத்வங்களை பரவி வளரச்செய்வதில் தடங்கலாகிவிட்டோம். இப்பொழுது இதை தடுப்பதெப்படி?

நாம் நமது தரும சாஸ்திரங்களை படிப்பது, அல்லது படித்தோரை கேட்டறிவது, முதல்படி. இரண்டாவது அன்னியமதமானாலும் ஒவ்வொரு தர்மசம்பந்தமுள்ள பெரியோரின் சரித்திரத்தை பார்ப்பதும் படிப்பதும். மூன்றாவது நாம் எந்த மதத்தை ஆசிரயித்து நிற்கிறோமோ, அதை வஞ்சகமன்னியில் அநுசரிப்பது. இப்பொழுது முதல் படியைப்பற்றி பார்ப்போம். நமது தரும சாஸ்திரங்கள் படிப்பது மிகவும் கஷ்டமானதென்றும் அதற்கு வேண்டிய சுலபமான புஸ்தகங்கள் இல்லையென்றும், மூல ஸம்ஸ்கிருத க்ரந்தங்கள் பழயகாலத்தில் இயற்றியவைகள், இப்பொழுது புதிதாய் வரும் மாணுக்கருக்கு பிரயோசனமற்றவைகளென்றும், புருஷர்கள்கூட வெவ்வேறு விதமாய் ஆக்ஷேபிக்கிறார்கள். ஆனால் நான் இவ்விடத்தில் உங்களுக்காகவே ஓர் ரகசியத்தை சொல்கிறேன். அதனால் இப்பொழுது உங்களுக்குண்டான பயமும், சமுசயமும் போய்விடும். அதாவது கற்ற புருஷர்களே இம்மாதிரி சொல்லும்பொழுது நாம் எந்த நூல்கள் மூலமாய் தரும சாஸ்திரம் அறியப்போகிறோம்?" இப்பொழுது நான் சொல்வதை கவனியுங்கள். மேற்படி ஆக்ஷேபங்கொள்ளும் புருஷர்களுக்கும், ஸ்திரீகளுக்கும் நிஜமான "ஜிஞ்ஞாசை" அதாவது அறிந்துகொள்ளவேணுமென்ற உணர்வு வரவில்லை. இதுதான் என் ரகசியம். மனிதத்தன்மை எப்படிப்பட்டதென்றால் ஒரு வேலை செய்யவேணும் என்று மனதில் உதித்துவிட்டால் அதை செய்யும் வரைக்கும் அவன் அமைதி அடையான். இதை ஒப்பிட்டுப் பார்க்கவேணுமானால் நற்காரியங்களைவிட துஷ்ட காரியம்

செய்யும் ஒருவனை கவனித்துப்பாருங்கள். மனிதன் தன் துஷ்ட எண்ணங்களை அடக்கிவைப்பதற்கு பதிலாக எப்பொழுதும் அதை நிறைவேற்றும்வழியே எதிர்ப்பார்க்கிறான். இதே சக்தியை கொண்டுதான் அவன் நல்வழி அடைவதும். ஆகையால் முதல் முதலில் நமக்கு தரும ஜிஞ்ஞாசை முதலில் உண்டாகவேணும். இவ்வாசையுண்டாக இம்மாதிரி தரும காரியங்களுக்காக ஏற்பட்ட ஜனங்கள் சகவாசம் வேண்டும். இவ்வாசை ஒருதரம் ஏற்பட்டுவிட்டால் அது தானே வழி தேடிக்கொண்டேபோகும். இது ஸ்திரீகளுக்கு புருஷர்களைவிட மிகவும் சுலபமான காரியமென்று நான் முன்னமே சொல்லியிருக்கிறேன்.

இரண்டாவது படியானது-அன்னியமதத்திலுதித்த பெரியோர் சரித்திரங்களையும், அவர்கள் பாடுபட்டு தேடிய தத்துவங்களையும் ஆராய்தல். தற்காலத்தில் இது மிகவும் முக்கியமானது; இப்படி பிறர் தேடிய தத்வங்களுக்காக நாம் ஏன் கஷ்டப்படவேணும்; அது முன்னதாகவே நமது மதாசிரியர்கள் கண்டு பிடித்திருக்கிறார்களே. என்றால்;. "வாஸ்தவமே, ஆனால், நீங்கள் பிறமதத்தை அவமதிக்க காரணமேன்? நமது மதாசிரியர்கள் கண்டுபிடித்த தத்வத்தை அவர் தேச, குண, தர்மப்படி, வேறுவழியாக கண்டு பிடிப்பது அவர்கள் குற்றமோ? அந்த வழி நமக்கு சரிப்படாதாயினும் அதைப்பற்றி அலக்ஷியமாக நினைக்கக்கூடாது. இது நாம் அன்னிய மத சம்பந்தமான வழிகளை பார்த்தாலொழிய தெரியாது. ஆனால், அன்னிய தரும தத்துவங்களை பார்ப்பதற்கு முன்னால் ஸ்வதர்மத்தை அறிய முயலவேணும். இல்லையாகில் இரண்டு மதத்திலுள்ள அபிப்ராய சாரம் க்ரஹிக்க அசமர்த்தர்களாய் நாம் செய்யும் கஷ்டம் வீணாய்விடும். இதைப்பற்றி ஜாக்கிரதையாய் இருக்கவேண்டும்.

மூன்றாவதுபடி—எந்தமதத்தை ஆசிரயித்து நின்றோமோ அதை வஞ்சகமன்னியில் அநுசரிப்பது. அதாவது யார் எந்த மதத்தினரோ அந்த மதத்தலைவர் அதாவது அம்மதமியற்றியவரின் ஆஞ்ஞைப்படி கூடியவரையில் நடந்துவரவேண்டியது, அம்மதத்தினர் கடமையே. ஆனால் இக்கடமையை நிறைவேற்றும்போது அவர் இட்ட கட்டளையின் தாத்பரியமென்ன என்பதை நன்கு ஆலோசித்து அதன்படி நடக்கவேண்டும். கடைசியில், ஒவ்வொரு மதாசிரியரும் ஒவ்வொரு அல்லது பலவாறான தத்வங்களின் உண்மையான ரூபங்களை வெளியிட வந்தவர். ஆகையால் அவரவர்களுடைய சிஷ்யராகிய நாம் அந்த தத்துவங்களுக்கு விரோதமன்னியில் நடந்துகொள்ளவேண்டியது நமது கடமை.

தற்காலத்தில் அவனருளால் இந்தியாவில் பல மதமும் பல ஜாதிகளும் அடங்கியுள்ளதாயிருக்கிறது. இப்படி இருப்பதனால் இந்த தேசத்தில் ஒற்றுமையாய் வாழ்வது கஷ்டமென்றும் இந்தியருக்கு ஒற்றுமை என்பது தெரியாதென்றும் வெளிதேசத்தார் நினைக்கின்றனர். ஆனால் பலவித புஷ்பத்தால் தொடுத்த ஒருவிதமாலையைபோல் விளங்கும் இப்பாரத நாட்டை எல்லாம் வல்லவரான ப்ரபுவின் அலங்காரமாக விளங்கச்செய்வது இந்திய புருஷர்களைப்போல இந்திய ஸ்திரீகளின் கடமையாயிருக்கிறது. இக்கடமையை நிறைவேற்ற ப்ரஹ்ம சமாஜத்தின் ஆசாரியராகிய ராஜா ராம் மோஹனாய் ஜனங்களுக்கு உபகரித்திருக்கிறார். அதற்காக இவருக்கும், இச்சமாஜத்தின் காரியதரிசிக்கும் வந்தனம் செலுத்துவோம்.

RUPAMATI

By B. S. Ramasubbier

ரூபாமதி

பி. எஸ். ராமசுப்பையரால்

வட இந்தியாவில் மாளவதேசத்தில் காளியாற்றின் கரையோரமாக அரசமரங்களும் மாமரங்களும் நெருங்கிக் கண்ணுக்குக் * குளிர்ந்த காட்சியைக்கொடுக்கும் ஸாரங்கபுரம என்ற சிறு கிராமம் ஒன்றுண்டு. இவ்வூரில்தான் ரூபாமதி என்பவள் வணிகன் ஒருவனுக்கு அருமைப் புதல்வியாகப் பிறந்து நாளொரு மேனியும் பொழுதொரு வண்ணமுமாக வளர்ந்து வந்தாள். அவள் யௌவனமடைந்ததும் அவள் பெயர் தேசமெங்கும் பிரசித்தியாயிற்று. அவளுடைய ரூபமும் நடையுடை பாவனைகளும் அழகாகவே யிருந்தாலும், எவருள்ளத்தையும் கொள்ளை கொள்ளும்படியான அவளுடைய இன்னிசைக் குரலே அவளுக்குக் கீர்த்தியை யுண்டாக்கிற்று. நாளுக்குநாள் அவளுடைய சாரீரத்திற்கு இனிமை அதிகரித்து நல்ல உச்சஸ்தாயியிலும் மிக ஆழ்ந்த மந்தரஸ்தாயியிலும் அவளுடைய கண்டம் அதி சுலபமாகத் தெளிவாய்ப் பேசும். இவ்வாறு பிராசீன ஸங்கீத சாஸ்திரத்தில் அவளுக்கு நிகர் ஒருவருமே இல்லையெனப் பெயர் பெற்றாள்.

இச்சமயத்தில் பராக்ரமசாலியான பாஸ்பஹதூர் என்னும் பட்டாணி வீரனொருவன் மாளவ தேசத்தை வென்று கைப்பற்றித் தானே அரசாண்டு வந்தான். மேலும் இவன் ஸங்கீதத்தில் மஹாசமர்த்தன். யுத்தத்திற்கோ, வேட்டைக்கோ, மற்றும் எவ்வளவோ சிரமமான வேலைகளினிமித்தமோ அரசன் வெளியிற் போய்த்திரும்பி அரண்மனை வந்ததும் தன் மந்தர சுருதி வாத்தியங்களைக் கையிலெடுத்துக்கொள்வான். அநேகமாய் நிச்சப்தமான இரவுகளில் கேட்பவர் மனம் லயிக்கத்தக்க அபூர்வ ராகங்களை மணிக்கணக்காய்த் தன்னை மறந்து வாசித்துக்கொண்டு ஸங்கீத ஸாஹித்யங்களில் ஆழ்ந்திருப்பான்.

ஒருவேளை இவன் ரூபாமதியைப்பற்றிக் கேட்டிருப்பானோ என்னவோ, கடைசியில் அவளையே மணந்தான். ஸங்கீதத்திலோ இருவருக்கும் பரம அபிருசி. அப்படியே தம் மற்ற மனோபீஷ்டங்களிலும் உயர்லக்ஷியங்களிலும் இருவரும் ஒவ்வொரு வகையிலும் ஒற்றுமையாய் வாழ்ந்து வந்தார்கள்.

அவனுக்கு ரூபாமதியிடத்திலிருந்த அன்பாவது என்னவென்னலாம்! அவள் மனத்தின் குறிப்பறிந்துகொண்டு அதை ராஜ ஆஜ்ஞையாக நிறைவேற்றிவந்தான். அவளும் அதி புத்திசாலியாகையால் தன் கணவனின் வேலைக்குத் தடையாக அல்ப ஆசையையோ அவசர வார்த்தையையோ ஒரு தரமும் வெளியிட்டதில்லை. அவளிடமில்லாத ஸ்வச்சமான வயிரங்களும் சிவந்த ரத்தினங்களும் பிரகாசமான முத்துக்களும் விசித்திர வேலைப்பாடுள்ள நகைகளும் புஷ்பம் போன்ற மிருதுவான ஆடைகளும் வேறெவரிடத்திலும் இல்லையென்னலாம். இவையெல்லாம் அழகுக்கழகு செய்வனவாகவே இருந்தன. அவள் இருப்பிடங்களோ அழகிய உய்யான வனங்கள் சூழ்ந்த பளிக்கு மண்டபங்களேயன்றி வேறல்ல.

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* 'Children of the Motherland' என்ற ஸெண்ட்ரல் ஹிந்துகாலேஜால் வெளியிடப்பட்ட புஸ்தகத்தினின்றெழுதப்பட்டது.

ஆனால், ஒரு ராஜ்யத்தை ஆளும் தேசாதிபதி எப்போதும் சுறுசுறுப்பாயும் விழிப்புள்ளவனாயு மிருக்கவேண்டும் என்பதை ரூபாமதி நாளாவர்த்தியில் முற்றும் மறந்தாள். அரசன் எப்படியிருத்தல்வேண்டும்? உள் நாட்டிலும் அக்கம் பக்கத்திலும் தூர தேசங்களிலும் நிகழும் வதந்திகளைத் தூதர்கள்மூலம் உடனுக்குடனே அறிந்தவண்ணமா யிருக்க வேண்டும். தன் அரசுக்குட்பட்ட பிரஜைகளைக் காப்பதில் சிரமத்தை யெண்ணக்கூடாது. அப்படியிருக்க ரூபாமதி அரசனுக்கு அதிக இடங்கொடுத்தாள். நானாவிதமான தந்த்ரீ வாத்தியங்களை ஒன்றாய்ச் சுருதி கூட்டிப் பிராசீன ஹிந்து ஸங்கீத ஸத்ஸம்பிரதாயப்படி அவைகளுடன் லயித்துத் தன் இனிய குரலெடுத்துப் பாடுவாள் ரூபாமதி.

அரசன் தன் கடமைகளை வரவர அலக்ஷியஞ்செய்தான். முக்கியமான உத்தரவுகளெழுதக் காகிதம் பேனா மைக்கூடுகள் தயாராயிராவிடினும் அரசன் அதைக் கண்டிப்பதில்லை. என்ன முழுகிப்போனது, வேலைக்காரன் கொண்டுவரட்டும். அதற்குள் இன்னொரு பாட்டுக்கேட்கலாம் என்றிருப்பான். அநேக சமயங்களில் மந்திரிகளை வெளியிற் காக்கவைத்து விட்டு அவர்கள் ஞாபகமேயில்லாமல் மணிக்கணக்காய் சங்கீதக்கச்சேரியில் ஆழ்ந்திருந்தான். அவசியமான காரியங்கள் யாவும் காலம் தவறினமையால் வியர்த்தமாயின. ராஜ்யமோ பாழடையத் தலைப்பட்டது. எந்த தேசத்திலிருந்து எந்த தூதன் எப்படிப்பட்ட பெரிய காரியமாக வந்திருந்தாலென்ன? அவர் போனால் போகட்டும். இன்னொரு ராகம் ஆலாபனம் ஆனால் சரி யென்பான். தர்பார் ஹாலில் ஆயிரக்கணக்கான ஜனங்கள் மனுவுங் கையுமாக வந்து காத்திருந்தாலென்ன? ஸிம்மாசனத்தின் மேலெல்லாம் புழுதிபடிந்திருந்தாலென்ன? வீணையையும், ஸித்தாரையும், மிருதங்கத்தையும் சுருதிகூட்டிச் சுத்தமாய் வைத்திருந்தால் போதும்.

'நம் திவான் நல்ல விசுவாஸமுள்ளவராயிற்றே. அவர் பிரஜைகளை நன்கு பரிபாலித்து வருகிறார். நான் மேன்மேலும் ஸ்வரவரிசைகளைக் கல்பனை பண்ணிப் பாடிக்கொண்டிருக்கலாம்' என்றே பஹதூர் எண்ணினான்.

இவ்வாறே எழு வருடம் சென்றது. இதற்குள் மொகலாய சக்ரவர்த்தியின் தூதுவர்கள் மாளவ தேசத்து நிலைமையை நன்கறிந்துபோய் டில்லியில் ஒருவர்க்கொருவர் பேசிக்கொள்ள ஆரம்பித்தார்கள். "இதுதான் சரியான சமயம். நமக்குள் துணிந்த வீரன் எவனாவது ஒருவன் போதும், மாளவத்தை இலேசாய்க் கைப்பற்றலாம். அத்தேசாதிபதிக்கோ பாட்டொன்றே ஞாபகம், மற்றெது எப்படியானாலும் ஒன்றுமில்லை. அவனுடைய திவான் புத்திசாலியாயினும் அவ்வளவு பெரிய நாட்டைத் தக்கவாறு ஆளச் சாமர்த்தியம் போதாது. ஸேனையை வேலை வாங்குவோர் ஒருவருமில்லாமல் ஸைந்யம் இப்போது உலைந்திருக்கிறது."

இவ்வாறு பேச்சு நடக்கையில் அக்பரின் ஸர்தாராகிய ஆதாம்கான் என்ற பேராசை பிடித்த வன்கணாளன் ஒருவன் மாளவ தேசத்தின்மேல் இரகசியமாய்ப் படையெடுக்க அக்பரை அநுமதி கேட்க, சக்ரவர்த்தியும் சரியென்றான்.

ஒருநாள் பஹதூர் ரூபாமதியருகே உட்கார்ந்து உல்லாசமாய்ப் பாடிக்கொண்டிருக்கிறான். வெளியிலிருந்து பேரிரைச்சல் ஒன்று கேட்டது. 'அரசே! ரக்ஷியும்' என்று ஜனங்கள் பயத்துடன் கூக்குரலிட்டு நடுநடுங்கி அரண்மனைக்குள் ஓடிவந்தார்கள். கடைசியாக மந்திரிகளும் ஸேவகர்களும், 'அரசே! சத்துரு வந்துவிட்டான். தெருக்களில் கொலை விழுகிறது' என்று தீனமாய்க் கதறினார்கள்.

'நாதா! ஜய விஜயீ பவ!!' என்று ரூபாமதி அரசனை உத்ஸாஹப்படுத்த, மன்னனும் கவசந்தரித்து வெளியிற் புறப்பட்டு ஸைந்யத்தை ஒருங்கு சேர்த்ததில் மிகச்சிலரே எஞ்சியிருந்தனர். வெகு பேர்கள் ஏற்கனவே கலைந்தோடிவிட்டனர். இன்னமும் அரசனுக்குக் கவலையில்லை. ஏன்? அவனோ ரணதீரனான பழைய பஹதூர் அல்ல. அவன் பயின்ற கலையினால் அவனுடைய வீரசுபாவம் முற்றும் மாறியது. அனுக்குத் தன்னாலும் சண்டை செய்ய முடியவில்லை. தன்னாட்களுக்கும் உற்சாகமூட்டக்கூடவில்லை. அவன் சேனை முறிபட்டது. அவனும் நாட்டைவிட்டுக் காடு சென்றான்.

அரண்மனையிற் சத்தமேயில்லை. ரூபாமதி மட்டும் தன் பிராணநாதன் ஜயத்துடன் எப்போது வருவான் என்று எதிர்ப்பார்த்த வண்ணமாயிருக்கிறாள். அந்தோ! பரிதாபம்!! ரூபாமதிக்கு தன் நாயகனுடைய நடையோசை நன்கு தெரியுமாகையால், மாற்றொருவனின் நடையோசை தன் அரண்மனைக்குள் கேட்பதையறிந்து திடுக்கிட்டாள். "இதென்ன விபரீதம்! எவனோ மூடனல்லவா பிரவேசித்திருக்கிறான் என்றெண்ணி ரூபாமதி திரையைச் சற்று நீக்கியதும், கவசம் பூண்ட நெடுந்தடியனொருவன் மேலெல்லாம்இரத்தக்கறைகளோடு எதிர் நிற்கக்கண்டு உள்ளம்பதைத்தாள். அவனே **ஆதம்கான்** என்பவன். அவன் உடனே பேரிடிபோல் சிரித்து "நீ பயப்படவேண்டாம். உன்மேல் எனக்கு மெத்த சந்தோஷம். உன் புருஷன் ஓடியே போய் விட்டான். இன்றிரவு நீ என் பிரியையாவாய்" என்ற நாராசம்போன்ற வார்த்தைகளை அவள் காதில்படச் சொன்னான். ரூபாமதி ஒரு வார்த்தையும் பதில் சொல்லாமல் திரையை மூடினதும் நெடுமரம் சாய்ந்ததுபோல் மூர்ச்சையுற்றுக் கீழே விழுந்தாள். சற்று தெளிந்தவுடன் கதறுகிறாள், புலம்புகிறாள். "என் ஆருயிர்த் துணைவா! நீ யேன் போனாய்? இனி நான் யாரை **நாதா** வென்பேன்! என்னை ஏன் இந்த விதிக்குள்ளாக்கினாய்? மரணபரியந்தம் நான் உன் பத்தினியல்லவா? நீ யமலோகத்திற்குப் போனால் நானும் உன்னோடங்கு வருவேன். நீ உயிரோடிருப்பின் பரபுருஷனைச் சேரும் துர்ப்பாக்கியம் எனக்கேன் வரும்?"

இவ்வாறு நெடுநேரம் அவள் தீனமாய்ப் பிரலாபித்து கிடக்கையில், சடிதியில் தன் மனத்தில் ஓரெண்ணமுண்டாகி எழுந்தாள், கண்ணைத் துடைத்துக்கொண்டாள். நிச்சயம் பண்ணிக்கொண்டாள். சஞ்சலந் தவிர்த்தாள்.

'ஹா! நாதா: வருகிறேன்' என்று தன் மனத்திற்குள் சொல்லிக்கொண்டே தன் அறைக்குட் சென்றாள். பொழுதும் சாய்ந்தது. சிறிது நேரத்திற்கெல்லாம் ஆதம்கான் வந்துவிடுவான். ஒரு ராணியாகவல்லவா அவனை வரவேற்க வேண்டும்? சேடிகளைப் பார்த்து, "தோழிமாரே! என்னை அழகாய்ச் சிங்காரிக்கவேண்டும். இன்றிரவு என் நாதனுக்கு மிக்க மனோஹரமாய் விளங்கப்போகிறேன்." என்றாள்.

சேடிகள் பயந்து லதாகிருஹத்தை அழகிய பூங்கொடிகளாலும் நறு மலர்களாலும் மணமுறச்செய்தார்கள். பன்னீர் முதலிய வாசனைத்திரவியங்களை மந்தமாய் வீசித் தெளிக்கும் நீரூற்றுகள் நாலு மூலைகளிலும் இருந்தன. விசாலமான படுக்கையின் மீது தங்கமும் முத்துக்களும் இழைத்த ஸால்வைகள் விரித்திருந்தன.

கட்டழகியான ரூபாமதி நல்ல ஆடை ஆபரணங்களை யணிந்துகொண்டு அதன்மேல் சாய்ந்து தூங்குகிறாள். அவளுடைய சோபையை இன்னும் எடுத்துக்காட்டும்படியாக அவள் முகத்தின்மீது இலேசான வலை மூட்ட மொன்றிருந்தது. அதன்மேல் தாமரைச்சிவப்பான கிரணங்கள் தீபங்களினின்றும் ஒளி வீசின. ஆதம்கானும் வெகு ஆடம்பரமான உடைகளுடன் ஆவலாய்ச் சயன கிருஹத்துள் பிரவேசித்தான். காவலாயிருந்த சேடி விம்மியழுது பெரு

மூச்செறிவதுகூட இவன் காதுக்குக் கேட்கவில்லை. காமாந்தனாய்ப் பள்ளியறையின் அழகை வியந்துகொண்டிருக்கிறான். பிறகு நேரே படுக்கையண்டை போனான். ரூபாமதியை உற்றுப்பார்த்தான். புன் முறுவலால் விளங்கிருக்கும் அவள் உதடுகளின் அழகைக்கண்டு மோஹித்தான். ஆனால், 'இதென்ன! உதடு அசையவில்லையே' என்று சந்தேகித்து, 'பிரியே!' என்றான். சால்வையின் மீது கிடக்கும் விளக்கையைத் தொட்டான். சில்லென்றிருக்கக்கண்டான், திகைத்தான். தன் மார்புமேல் கை வைத்துப் பார்த்துக்கொண்டான். நாடி ஒடுங்கியிருந்தது. பயந்து அறையைவிட்டு வெளியேகினான். ரூபாமதியும் தாங்கியே உயிர் நீத்தாள். விஷம் எளிதில் சரீரமுழுதும் வியாபித்தது.

பிறகு அவள் தலையணைக்கடியில் பின் வரும் கடிதம் எழுதிவைத்திருந்தாள்.

"ஏழை நெஞ்சே! பிராணநாதர் போனபிறகு உனக்கு வேறென்ன சுகம் இருக்கிறது? இவ்வுலகமுழுவதிலும் உனக்குத்துணைவர் வேறொருவரும் இல்லை. இங்கே தனியேயிருந்தழுவது கஷ்டம். ஆகையால் நானும் வருகிறேன், வருகிறேன்."

சமாசாரக் குறிப்புகள்

கல்கத்தா ஸ்திரீகளுக்கு ஓர் ஸர்வகலாசாலை:—ஸர் அசுடோஷ் முகர்ஜி யவர்கள் தலைமையின்கீழ் மேற்குறித்த ஸர்வகலாசாலையை ஸ்தாபிக்க ஓர் கமிட்டி ஏற்பட்டிருக்கிறது. அதன் உத்தேசமாவது:—

(1) பரீக்ஷை தேறி உத்யோகத்திற்குப் போக விரும்பாமல் வீட்டு வேலைகளை நன்று கவனித்துப்பார்த்து பொதுப்பட நாகரிகமாயிருக்க விரும்பும் பெங்காளிப் பெண்களுக்கும், (2) பள்ளிக்கூடங்களுக்குப் போகமுடியாத விவாகமானயுவதிகளுக்கும், வயதான ஸ்திரீகளுக்கும் (வீட்டில் படிப்பிக்கவும்), (3) விவாகமாகாத பெண்களுக்கும், புருஷனை யிழந்த ஸ்திரீகளுக்கும் (உரிய தொழிற் படிப்பைக் கற்பித்து, தங்கள் பந்துகளுக்குப் பாரமாயிராமலும், அநீதியான வழிகளிற் செல்லாமலும், அவர்களைக் காக்கவுமே) இதை ஆரம்பித்திருக்கிறார்கள்.

'பரீக்ஷை' என்று பெண்களையும் அதைரியப்படுத்தாமல் மேல் நாட்டுப் படிப்பின் சிறந்த அம்சங்களாகிய பௌதிக சாஸ்திரத்தையும் செய் தொழில்களையும் நந்நாட்டுப் புராதன ஸ்திரீ தர்மத்தையும் தெய்வபக்தியையும் ஒன்றுபடுத்திப் புகட்டுவதற்காகவே இது ஏற்பட்டுளது.

பீஜீ தீவில் இந்தியமாதர்களுக்கு சகாயம்:—அங்கே முதன்முதலாக டாக்டர் மில்ட்ரேட் ஸ்டேலி என்பவர் மேற்பார்வையில் சர்க்காரால் ஸ்திரீகளுக்கும் குழந்தைகளுக்கும் ஓர் தனி வைத்தியசாலை ஏற்பாடாகியிருக்கிறது. அங்கு இந்தியர்களின் நிலைமையைச் சீர்திருத்தச் சென்ற ஆஸ்டிரேலியர் கமிட்டியாருள் அவர் தக்கவேலை செய்திருக்கிறார். அவருக்கு உதவியாக ஓர் இந்திய மாது மருத்துவத்தொழில் பார்க்க நியமிக்கப்பட்டிருக்கிறார்.

மதராஸில் நடந்த கலைத்தொழிற் காட்சி:—இம்மாதிரிக் காட்சிக்கை விசேஷமாய் ஸ்திரீகள் பார்த்தல்வேண்டும். தங்கள் வீடுகளை அழகாய் ஒழுங்குபடுத்திப் பரிமளிக்கச் செய்வதற்கு அநேக குறிப்பான விஷயங்களைத் தெரிந்து கொள்வார்கள்.

மதராஸில் அநாதைக் குழந்தைகளின் ரக்ஷணார்த்தமான சங்கம்:—இதன் பதினாலாவது அறிக்கைப் பத்திரத்திலிருந்து விளங்குவதென்னவெனில்:—சென்ற வருஷத்தில், அதற்கு முந்திய வருஷத்திற்காட்டிலும் ரூ. 2,000 அதிகமாக வருமானம் கிடைத்தபோதிலும், கார்ப்பொரேஷன்காரர் செய்யும் உதவி போதாது. வருங்கால க்ஷேமத்திற்குப் பரம ஆதாரமானது குழந்தைகளைச் சரியாய்ப் பரிபாலிப்பதேயாகையால் சட்டசபையில் ஷை சபைகளுக்கு அதிக பணம் எடுத்துவைக்க கௌன்சிலர்கள் முயலுவார்களாக.

ஸ்திரீ முனிசிபல் கவுன்சிலர்கள்:—கராச்சி முனிசிப்பாலிட்டியில் ஸ்திரீகளும் முனிசிபல் கவுன்சிலர்களாக வருவார்களேயானால், அவர்களுக்கும் ஜனங்களால் நியமனம் பெற அதிகாரமுண்டு, ஸ்திரீகளுக்கும் புருஷர்களைப் போலவே ஸமமான சுதந்த்ரமும் அந்தஸ்தும் பாத்யதைகளும் உண்டு எனத்தீர்மானிக்கப்பட்டிருக்கிறது. பம்பாய் முனிசிபல் ஆக்டைத் திருத்துவதிலும் ஸ்திரீகளைப் புறம்பாக்காமல் அவர்களுக்கு ஸமபாத்தியதை யளிக்கும்படியான பிரயத்னம் நடந்துவருகிறது.

நம் பத்ராதிபர்:—ஸ்ரீமதி மிஸ்ஸஸ் ஜினராஜதாஸ இம்மாதம் 18-தேதி ஆஸ்டிரேலியாவுக்குப் போகிறார். திரும்புவதற்கு 4 மாஸம் செல்லும். சமீபத்தில் ஜ்வரத்தினால் மிகக் கஷ்டப்பட்டுக்கொண்டிருந்தார். இங்கே நமக்குக் கோடைகாலமாயிருந்தாலும் ஆஸ்டிரேலியாவில் மிக்க குளிர்காலமாயிருக்கும். அவருடைய உடம்பு திடப்படும். இங்கே பத்திரிகை வேலையை வழக்கம்போல் ஸ்ரீமதி மிஸ்ஸஸ் கஸின்ஸ் வேலை பார்த்து வருவார்.

சிசுமரணம்:—பிரதிவருஷமும் பம்பாயில் 1,000-க்கு 800 வீதம் குழந்தைகள் மரிக்கின்றனவாம். அதிலும் 5-வயதுக்குட்பட்ட குழந்தைகளின் மரணத்தைமட்டும் கணக்கிட்டால் அது இன்னும் அதிகமாம். மற்ற தேசங்களில் இதற்கு நிவிருத்தியுபாயங்களைச் செய்து சாவு தொகையை மிகக் குறைத்திருக்கிறார்கள். இப்போது இங்கிலாந்தில் ஆயிரத்துக்கு 60 குழந்தைகள்தான் இறக்கின்றன. இந்தியாவிலோ ஆயிரத்துக்கு 350-க்குக் குறையாமல் குழந்தைகள் சாகின்றன. ஸர்வ இந்தியா மாத்ரு சிசு பரிபாலன ஸங்கம் ஒன்று லேடி செம்ஸ்போர்டு அவர்களால் ஏற்படுத்தப்பட்டும் அதற்குப் போதிய திரவிய சகாயம் பொதுஜனங்களிடமிருந்து கிடையாமையால், அதன் உபயோகமும் குறைந்திருக்கிறது. மிக்க இளம்பிராயத்தில் பெண்களுக்கு கர்ப்பாதானம் செய்வித்தலால் பலஹீனமான சிசுக்கள் பிறந்து உடனே மரிக்கின்றனவாகையால், அக்கொடிய வழக்கத்தை வரையேற நிறுத்தவேண்டும்.

தேவதாஸிகள்:—சிறு பெண்களை கோவிலுக்காக என்ற வியாஜத்தைச் சொல்லிக்கொண்டு தாஸிகளின் அக்ரமமான வியாபாரங்கள் செய்வித்துவரும் துர்வழக்கத்தை நிறுத்த ஓர் சட்டத்தை டாக்டர் கௌர் பிரேரணை செய்யவே, ஸ்ரீமான் டி. ரங்காசார்யர் என்பவர் இவ்விஷயம் அந்தந்த ராஜதானி கவர்ண்மெண்டுகளாலும் பொதுச்சபைகளாலும்தீர்மானிக்கப் படவேண்டியதென்று ஆக்ஷேபங்கூறியும், சட்டம் பெரும்பான்மையான மெம்பர்களின் சம்மதத்தின்மேல் நிறைவேறியது. கோவில்களில் தேவதாஸிகளை நிறுத்துவதனால்மட்டும் வியபிசாரம் நின்றுவிடாதாயினும் கோவிலின் ஆதரவின்மேல் நடவாமலிருப்பது மிகத்திருப்திகரமான விஷயம். "பெண்களுக்கு பதினாறு வயதுக்குட்பட்டு இந்தியாவில் கர்ப்பாதானம் செய்வித்தல் 'பலாத்காரப்புணர்ச்சி' யென்னும் குற்றமாகவே முடியும்" என்பதற்கு ஒரு மசோதா மிஸ்டர் ஸோஹன்லால் என்பவர் பிரேரணை செய்யப்போவதாகச் சொன்னதற்கு சட்டசபையாரும் அதை ஆதரிப்பதாகச் சம்மதங் கொடுத்திருக்கிறார்கள். ஸ்திரீகளும் குழந்தைகளும் ரக்ஷிக்கப்படுதற்பொருட்டு இச்சட்டங்கள் சீக்கிரம் நிறைவேறவேண்டுவதவசியம்.

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స్త్రీ ధర్మవిశేషములు

(జనవరి సంచిక విశేషములు)

పతివ్రతారత్నమగు భార్యను వంధ్యయను హేతువుచే లోకములో వెలిఁబుచ్చు నాచారమీదేశములో వినలేము; ఉన్నచో నిది యాకుటుంబమునకు నమర్యాదయు, నవమానమును, దెచ్చును. ధర్మసూత్రకాలములో నిర్హేతుకముగ సతిని విడనాడినవాఁడు గడుసు ర్మార్గుఁడుగఁ జూడఁబడి తత్పాప పరిహారార్థము, వానికిఁ బ్రాయశ్చిత్తము విధింపఁబడియె. భర్తపైఁ బ్రేమఁగలిగిన పతివ్రతయగు భార్య రోగిణి యయినచో నామె యనుమతివడసి యామెను విడనాడనగుఁగాని యెప్పుడు నవమానింపఁదగదు అని స్మృతి విధించుచున్నది.

5. ప్రాచీనకాలములో వివాహార్థము వధువును శ్రద్ధతో వెదకినట్లగపడు. పంచమహాయజ్ఞములగు నిత్యకర్మలను జేసి శాశ్వత సుఖము నొందుటకు గాను ప్రతిపురుషుఁడు గార్హస్థ్య మవలంబించవలయు నని పూర్వుల తలంపు. కాని వివాహము స్త్రీలకు నిత్యముగ విధింపఁబడినట్లు పురుషులకు విధింపఁబడలేదు. పడుచువాఁడు నైష్ఠికబ్రహ్మచారిగ నుండనగు. ఉండినచో జన్మాంతరమున నుత్తమలోకప్రాప్తి నొంది తిరిగి పుట్టఁడు. అయినఁ జాలమంది పెండ్లియాడి గృహస్థాశ్రమ ప్రవిష్టు లయిరి. కాని భార్య మంచిదికానిది కర్మానుష్ఠానము సమగ్రముగ జరగనేరదు. కాన నందులకుఁ దగిన స్త్రీలక్షణములు విశేషముగ స్మృతులలో జెప్పఁబడినవి. ఈవిధులలోఁ గొన్నిటి నుదాహరించెద. అవి త్రైవర్ణులగు ద్విజుల కందఱకు సామాన్యములు గాని బ్రాహ్మణులకు మాత్రమే గాదు. "శుభచిహ్నములు గలిగి సవర్ణురాలగు స్త్రీ గృహస్థునకు ధర్మపత్ని యగు. ఆమె తనతల్లికి సపిండురాలు కాఁగూడదు. తనతండ్రి గోత్రీకురాలు కాఁగూడదు." తనరక్తస్పర్శ యేమాత్ర ముండఁగూడదని యీనిబంధన సూచించుచున్నది. రానురా నాచారము దీనిని నిరాకరించుటచే నిపుడు మేనత్తపిల్లలు మేనమామపిల్లలతోను, మేనకోడలను మేనమామ, వివాహ మాడుచున్నారు. ఈసంబంధములు ప్రశస్తములు కాకపోయినను దక్షిణహిందూస్థానములోఁ జాల భాగము వ్యాపించినవి. బ్రాహ్మణులలో సగోత్రీకులు వివాహములు చేయరనునది సర్వసాధారణ నియమము. ఇతరార్యులలో నింటిపేరొకటియయినచోఁ బెండ్లి జేసికొనరు. ఇఁక నిషేధ విధులేమన: "వేదము వేదిక లేని యింటిపిల్లను, మొగపిల్లను గలుగని కుటుంబపు పిల్లలను, దట్టమగు రోమము గల స్త్రీజనులున్న యింటిపిల్లను, నాఁడరోగములు, అజీర్ణము, మూర్ఛ, తెల్ల లేక నల్లకుష్ఠు, నెఱ్ఱి వెంద్రుకలు, గల స్త్రీని నెక్కువయంగములు (ఆరువేళ్లు కణితి వగైరా) గల స్త్రీ, నెప్పుడు రోగపీడితురాలయిన దానిని, రోమరహిత మైన దానిని, అతిసక్తయగుదానిని, నెఱ్ఱికన్నులుగలదానిని, నక్షత్ర, వృక్ష, నదీ, అధమవర్ణ, పర్వత, పక్షి, సర్ప, సేవకభూతాదులలో నెవరిపేరైనను గలదానిని వరింపఁగూడదు." దేహాంగలోపము లేనట్టియుఁ జక్కని పేరుగలిగి హంసయాన యగుదానిని, లేక మదగజగామినిని, శిరోవయవాదులందుఁ దగుమాత్రము రోమమును గలిఁగి, పలుచని పలువరుస మృద్వంగములు గలదానిని, వరింపనగు." ఇత్యాదివిధులు గలవు.

6. ప్రకృతమందు నిషేధములు చాలమట్టుకు నిషేధింపఁబడుచున్నవి గాని, గమనింపఁబడుటలేదు. అంగవిశేషమునుగాని, అంగలోపములుగాని గలవధువు చవుకఁ (అగ్గువ) గ దొరకును గానఁ దానికిఁ ద్వరఁగఁ బెండ్లియవును. ఇది స్వల్పవిషయమని యనుకొనఁగిట్టను. తండ్రి కూఁతుల కందఱకుఁ బెండ్లిచేయక తప్పదు. ధర్మశాస్త్రమునకు విరోధమగు నింకొక దురాచారము మనలో విశేషముగ నున్నది. దానిపేరు కన్యాశుల్కము లేక విక్రయము. "తండ్రి కూఁతును బెండ్లిచేసి యేమాత్రము సొమ్మునాశింపఁ గూడదు; ధనాశతోఁ గొంచెముగానైనను, హెచ్చుగానైనను, సొమ్ముపుచ్చికొనినయెడలఁ బిల్ల నమ్మినవాఁడగును." అని శాస్త్రము చెప్పి దీని నసురవివాహమని నిందించుచున్నది. ఈసంగతి మనజనసంఘమున కత్యావశ్యకమయినను దీనిని సంఘసంస్కారణకర్తలు బాగుగ దూఱుటలేదు. ద్రవ్యవంతులు యథాశక్తిని తమకూఁతుల వివాహములలో నాభరణములు, పట్టు బట్టలు, సరిగచీరలుఁ, బట్టంచుచీరలు, వెండి, యిత్తడి, పాత్రసామానులు, మంచము "నగయిరా" సామగ్రి, యిండ్లు, భూములు, నరణముగ నిచ్చెదరు. ఈవివాహవిషయములో నితరులకంటె "నంబూదిరి" (మలయాళ) బ్రాహ్మణుల నడత మెచ్చఁదగినది. పిల్లకు విలువగల వస్త్రములఁగట్టి నగలుపెట్టి, వేదము వచ్చిన సత్ప్రవర్తనఁ గలవానికి బ్రాహ్మవివాహవిధానానుసరణముగఁ బెండ్లి జేయుదురు. తఱుచుగ నీకాలములో నగలకు, "ఖరీదు" గల్లబట్టలకు, బహులుగ 3 లేక 5 వేల రూపాయ లల్లునకిత్తురు. ఇందుచే నెక్కువ కూఁతులుగల భాగ్యవంతుల కుటుంబములుగూడఁ జాలఁబాడైనవి. బీదవారలైనచో మలయాళ బ్రాహ్మణ స్త్రీలకు వివాహము లేదు. తూర్పుసీమలో, నొకకన్నుగాని, యింకొక యంగముగాని పోయిన స్త్రీని సులభముగను, మనుధర్మమునకు భిన్నముగను, చవుకఁగను, బెండ్లిజేయుచున్నారు. పిల్లకు దట్టమయిన రోమము లున్నవనిగాని, యెఱ్ఱికన్ను లున్నవనిగాని యిప్పుడేమి యోచించరు; అట్టిలజ్జయు లేదు. పిల్ల వాఁగుచున్నదా లేదా యను సంగతి విచారించుటయే లేదు. ఏలయన హిందూ స్త్రీలు సామాన్యముగఁ బెద్దలయినకొలఁది నతిమాటకారులేగాన నదిదోషమని యెంచరు. విశేషముగ మాటాడు నలవాటింగ్లీషు స్త్రీలకుఁ గలదు. అందుపిల్లల బడిలో నొకయింగ్లీషు పెద్దమనుష్యుఁ డుపన్యసించుచు స్త్రీలు తఱుచుగ వాచదూక (అతివక్త) లని చెప్పఁగ నతనిభార్య కోపపడక యూరకుండెను. అది నేను జూచినాను, గాన నీయాచారము పూర్వపశ్చిమ స్త్రీసామాన్యధర్మ మనవచ్చు. పిల్లనుజేసికొను

టకు పూర్వము పిల్లవాని తలిదండ్రు లతిజాగ్రతతో విచారించి యాదరముతోఁ గోరువిషయము లేవన:—పిల్లకుటుంబమువారు మంచివారా? వారికి స్వగ్రామములో మంచిపేరున్నదా? అనఁగా, వారింటి స్త్రీలు పతివ్రతలా, పురుషులు శ్రోత్రియులు, మర్యాదస్థులా? అనుసంగతులు. పిల్లరూపలావణ్యము, భాగ్యము, తర్వాత విచారింపఁబడు. పిల్ల కుదిరినపిదప యథావిధిని మంత్రములతో వివాహము చేయఁబడును. పూర్వయుగపు ద్విజులకు 8 విధములవివాహము లుండెనుగాని, యిపుడు బ్రాహ్మ, దైవ, ఆర్ష, వివాహములకుమాత్ర మాచారము గలదు. ఇతర వివాహము లీకలిలో లేవు.

7. హిందూజాతి కత్యంతావశ్యకము లగు నతిబాల్యవివాహమును స్త్రీ పునర్వివాహముఁ గూర్చి ప్రశంసించెదను. మనసంఘమున కీరెండుఁ జాల నగత్యములు. ఈరెంటివిషయమయి గట్టినిబంధన చేయఁబడనిది మనహిందూ సంఘముయొక్క సంస్కరణము నెఱవేఱదు. ధర్మశాస్త్రములలో నేను గట్టివాఁడను గానందున వానిలోని పరస్పరవిరుద్ధ కారికలను సమన్వయింపలేను, మఱి వానిలో దేనిననుసరింప వలసినదనియు నుడువలేను. కాని యీ రెండాచారములను మార్చుటకుఁ దగినకాలము వచ్చినదని నానమ్మకము. మనదేశములోనున్న బాలవిధవలవృద్ధికి మూలకారణమగు నతిబాల్యవివాహము తప్పక మార్చనగునని నేను రూఢిగ నమ్మెదను.

8. బాలవిధవలు విశేషముగ నున్నారని యొప్పుకోవలసినది. సందేహమున్నయెడల మైసూరుదేశము దృష్టాంతముగఁ దీసికొనుఁడు. దానిలోని స్త్రీజనములోని నాలుగవవంతు వితంతువులు. వారిలో సగము బాలవిధవలయియుండక తప్పదని నేను నమ్మెద. ఈయుగములో నిట్టిదురవస్థ రావలసినదని ప్రాచీన స్మృతికారులు తలంచియుండరని నానిశ్చయము. అట్లుగానిచోఁ బూర్వయుగములలో "అక్షతయోను" లగు బాలవితంతువులకుఁ బునరుద్వాహ మేల వారంగీకరించిరి? కాన మనగొంతునకు మనమే యురిఁబోసికొనినట్లతి బాల్యవివాహముఁ దెచ్చిపెట్టికొన్నట్లగపడు. పిల్లకుఁ బెండ్లి యాడువిషయమై స్మృతికర్తలు భిన్నాభిప్రాయులైరి. అందఱిలో మనువు విశేషస్వాతంత్ర్యేచ్ఛఁ గలవాఁడు. "వివాహవయస్సు వచ్చినపిదప మూఁడేండ్లు పెండ్లికి నిరీక్షింపవలయు" నని వ్రాయుటచే బెండ్లిలేక రజస్వల యయినపిదప మూడేండ్లుండవగు. అర్వాచీన ఋషులు నిర్బంధముల నెక్కువజేసిరి. "రజస్వలయగుటకు ముందే పిల్లకుఁ బెండ్లిచేయవగు, లేనిచో దానితండ్రికిఁ బాపమువచ్చును" అని గౌతముఁడు, వసిష్ఠువు నుడివిరి. "రజస్వలయిన పిల్లనింటనుంచినచోఁ బాపము వచ్చునుగాన నుంచఁగూడదు" అని బోధాయనవిధి కాన హిందూకన్యకు రజస్వలకాకమునుపు పెండ్లిఁజేయవగు నని స్మృతుల తలంపని యనవచ్చు. అట్లయినచో 1,2,3,4,5,6 లేక 7వ యేఁటఁ బిల్లకుఁ బెండ్లికక్కఱతి (యవసరము) యేల? మనదేశములలోఁ గాఁక "జాస్తి" గనుకను, మనపిల్లలు త్వరలోనే సమర్తాడుదురు గనుకను, 10 యేండ్లకుగాని లేక 11వ యేఁడు సమీపింపఁగా నేల పెండ్లి చేయఁగూడదు? అంతవఱకు నాపఁగలిగి నప్పటికి 100కి 90 మంది చొప్పున, 10 యేండ్లకు లోపుగానే యేల పిల్లలకుఁ బెండ్లిచేయవలె? తంజావూరు జిల్లాలోని జనసమ్మర్దముగల ఆఱవగ్రామములో నొక యూరిలో నాలుగేండ్లపిల్లలకు వివాహముచేసిరి. మార్చుటకు వీలున్న మన దురవస్థలలో నిదియొకటి గాదా? నాస్నేహితుఁడొక నాటకములో గొంతపట్లు చదివెను. ఇద్దఱు పురుషులు మనువులు కుదుర్చుకొనుచున్నారు. "మనభార్యలిద్దఱు గర్భిణీస్త్రీలు గద. నాకుఁ గొడుకు గలుగును, నీకుఁ గూఁతురు కలుగును గద. మనమిద్దరము వియ్యమందుదము" అనియొకరన, రెండవవారు సరియే, నని యనెను. ఈ హాస్యము మన మీవిషయములో యుక్తాయుక్తములేక దురాచారపిశాచగ్రస్తులమయి మూఢతమూలమయి, యతిబాల్యవివాహమును జేయుచు, మనసంఘలాభ మేమాత్రము నరయలేదని లేమిడిని సూచించుచున్నది. ఈవిషయ మాంధ్రకర్ణాటకాది సర్వహిందూదేశసామాన్యము. వధువులు శిశువులయినపుడు వారి వరులుగూడ పెండ్లిలో ముద్దు హద్దు చూచుటకు నతిబాలుర్లు గాకుండక తప్పదు. అట్లేయుంచున్నారు. మనపిల్లకాయలలో ముప్పాతిక మువ్వీసము 12, 15, అధమము 18 దేండ్లకు లోపలనే వివాహ మవుచున్నది. 24 గేండ్లకులోపల మగవానికిఁ బెండ్లిచేయఁ గూడదని మనువు 9వ అధ్యాయమందలి 94వ శ్లోకములోవిధించెను.

9. స్మృతి విధించిన ధర్మములన్నియు నతివిశ్వాసముతో హిందూగృహిణి యాచరించును. "గృహిణి స్వంతముగ భర్త కుపచారముచేసి, యతని నిత్యకర్మలలో సాయమీయునగు. నది సాగరమును బొందునట్లు, భర్తగుణములను భార్య పొందును. పిల్లలను గనుటకు, వారినిఁ బెంచుటకు, గృహస్థుని నిత్యకర్మకు, భార్య యాధారము. "సంతానము, శ్రౌతస్మార్తకర్మానుష్ఠానము, నతిథ్యాది పూజ, గార్హస్థ్యసౌఖ్యము, తనకు, తన పితృపితామహాదులకు, సద్గతి భార్యవలననే గలుగు." "మనోవాక్కాయనియమ మాచరించుచు, తనభర్తకు సేవ తప్పకచేయుచున్న భార్య చనిపోయినపిదప నతనితో స్వర్గసుఖ మనుభవించును. ఇక్కడ పరమపతివ్రత యనియు, సాధ్వి యనియు, నామెకు ఖ్యాతివచ్చు." మంచి పెండ్లము పూర్ణమయిన రేవుపట్టు (ఓడలు తొందరలేక దిగుచోటు) అని "సర్జను లబ్బకు" అనెను. హిందూస్త్రీలలోఁ జాలమంది యట్టివారే. భర్తకు సుఖము నాపాదించు విషయముననును, గృహకార్యములు నెమ్మదితోఁ జూచువిషయముననును, హిందూగృహిణిని మీరువారు లేరు. గృహములో నామె వినయముతో నుండి యధికారము చేయుచున్నను, ఇంటిపనియంతయుఁ జేయుటలోను, ధర్మాచరణాసక్తిలోను, విశ్వాసములోను, నోర్పులోను, సహనములోను, శమదమములలోను, పితృభర్త్రాజ్ఞల కనువర్తియై నడచుటలోను, హిందూగృహిణిని మీరువారు లేరు. దమయంతిని విడనాడి నలుఁడేమనియెనో చూడుఁడు. చాఁపగుడ్డయైనను లేక, చిన్నబట్టఁగట్టుకొని మన్నుతో బురదతో నిండిన దేహముతోఁ దనతో నష్టకష్టములుపడి నిద్రించుచున్న విదర్భలక్ష్మియగు నాదమయంతీదేవిని నిర్ఘృణుఁడై పాపిష్ఠియాలోచనకులోనై "బాలనొక్కర్తు నిక్కాన పాలుచేసి!

నిష్ఠురుండనై యేనెట్లు నేర్తుబోవ! ననక" కాఱడవిలో విడనాడి కొన్నాళ్లకు బశ్చాత్తాపపరితప్తుఁడై నలుఁడిట్లు దనలోఁ బలవరించెను-

సంస్కృతము

వైషమ్యమపి సంప్రాప్తా గోపాయంతి కులస్త్రియః
ఆత్మానమాత్మనా సత్యో జితస్స్వర్గో నసంశయః॥
రహితా భర్తృభిశ్చాపి నక్రుధ్యంతి కదాచన
ప్రాణాంశ్చారిత్రకవచాః ధారయంతి వరస్త్రియః॥
విషమస్థేన మూఢేన పరిభ్రష్టసుఖేనచ
యత్సా తేన పరిత్యక్తా తత్రన క్రోద్ధుమర్హతి॥
(మహాభారతే-వనపర్వణి 74 అధ్యాయే 25-27. శ్లోకాః)

తెలుఁగు.

ఎంతకష్టము వచ్చినను, సత్కుల స్త్రీలు దానిని హృదయమందే యుంచుకొనుదురు; అంతఃకరణముచే నాత్మనెఱిఁగి శాశ్వత సుఖము నొందుదురు; ఏమి సంకటము వచ్చినను, పెనిమిటివిడలినను, కోపపడరు; నారీమణుల సత్ప్రవర్తనమే వారికి వజ్రకవచమయి యాపదల నంటనివ్వదు; విషమదశకు వచ్చిన, మూఢుఁడయిన, సుఖములేకున్న, భర్తవిడనాడుటచే కులస్త్రీలు కోపపడరు.

పతివ్రతాలక్షణము నిట్లు మహాభారతము ప్రకటించుచున్నది-

సంస్కృతము

అర్ధం భార్యా మనుష్యస్య భార్యా శ్రేష్ఠతమస్సఖా।
భార్యా మూలం త్రివర్గస్య భార్యా మూలం తరిష్యతః॥

తెలుఁగు

పతిభక్తిగల భార్య తనభర్తలో సగము; భర్తకు ముఖ్యస్నేహితురాలు; ధర్మార్థకామములకు హేతువు; అతను తరించి మోక్షమును బొందుటకుఁగూడ కారణము.

చిఱునగవునవ్వు భార్య భర్తకు నేకాంతమందుండు చేడియ; బుద్ధి (సలహా) చెప్ప తండ్రితో సమానురాలు; సంసారమను నిసుక యెడారిలో నడుచు బాటసారికి పచ్చికపట్టువంటిది. (కార్యేషు దాసీ, కరణేషు మంత్రీ, రూపేషు లక్ష్మీ, క్షమయా ధరిత్రీ, భోజ్యేషు మాతా, శయనేన రంభా).

10. ఇది పూర్వదిశనున్న మనదేశపు నాగరికత. మఱియు నివిద్య "బళ్ళకువెళ్ళక, పాఠములు చదువక, వానినవలంబింపకయే, హిందూబాలికలు తమతమ తల్లులకడను, పెద్దలయినచో నత్తల యొద్దను నేర్చికొనినది." ఇది సర్వనాగరికములలోను శ్రేష్ఠమని నేను సాధింపను. బహుశః యూరోపుదేశపు నాగరికత దీనికంటె నెక్కువది గావచ్చును; మనదానికంటె తక్కువది గాకున్నను, భార్యాభర్తలకుఁ గల ధర్మములు, విధేయతాద్విప్రవర్తనలు, బాహ్యమునఁ గనఁబఱచుటలో మనకంటె వేఱుగనున్నవి. ఇంగ్లీషు సతి యన్ని విషయములలోను దనభోక్తయగు పతితోఁ దాను సమానమనుకొనును. ఇంటికి యజమానురాలామె; తనయాజ్ఞఁ దాటఁగూడదని తలంపు గృహిణి భోజన పంక్తిలో నితరులకంటె మొదటఁ గూర్చుండును. మనదేశపు సాధ్వి భర్తను నతిథులను వడ్డించి వారు తిన్నపిదపఁ దాను గుడుచును. "భార్యతో భోజనముచేయఁగూడదనియు, నామె తినునపుడు, చీదునపుడు, నావులించునపుడు, 'కులాసా' గాఁ గూరుచున్నపుడు నామెను భర్త చూడఁగూడదనియు" మనువానతిచ్చెను. ఇది నేఁటికి నడుచుచున్నది; భర్తయపకారముఁజేసినను హిందూసాధ్వి చాడిచెప్పదు. మఱి యెక్కడైయినచోఁ దనతల్లితోఁ జాటున మొఱబెట్టుకొనును; ఆమెగూడ నేమి చేయలేదు. అల్లునితోనైన నత్త మాటాడదు, ఎదురుపడదు. ఇతరులతో నల్లునిగూర్చి మాటాడునపుడు బహుగౌరవముతోఁ బలుకును. ఇంగ్లీషువారింటనుండు నత్త లధికప్రసంగులని వినుచున్న మనకు మనయత్తగార్లు మనతో మాటాడకుండుట యెంతక్షేమమో మీరే యోచించుఁడు. "దోరారస్సెలు" చేసిన కల్పనకథలో నిట్లున్నది: ఒక పురుషుని పేరు టెంపిల్. టెంపిల్‌గారి కొక్కఁడే కొడుకుండెను. వాఁడు చచ్చెను. ఇది బహుశోచనీయమైన దురవస్థ. అప్పుడు టెంపిల్లునకుఁ దనను పెండ్లిచేసినందుకు వానిభార్య తనతల్లితోఁ గోపించుకొని తనభర్తయెదుట వచ్చి దుఃఖముతో నిట్లేడ్చెను. "నీవు నామెడఁబట్టి యొప్పింపక పోయినచో నీపిల్లఁడు పుట్టకుండెడుగదా. నీవు నిర్బంధింపక పోయినచో జ్యార్జిహిల్లుతో నుండెడుదానను గదా! వానియొద్దనుండి నన్నెడఁబాపితివిగదా" ఈమాటలు వినుచున్న భర్తను జూచి నాకు జాలివచ్చుచున్నది. దుఃఖమును నివారింప నిచ్చఁగలిగి, యల్లుని నోదార్ప నిట్లత్తమాటాడెను. "దుఃఖముచేత నయ్యో యీరాకియల్ ఎంత యొడలు మఱచినది. హా! యిప్పుడు జార్జిహిల్లు ప్రస్తావము చేయుచున్నది. ఇదేమి వింత! పాపము వాఁడుచచ్చి 10 యేండ్లాయెను. వారలు పసితనమున నొకచోటనే యుండిరి. నీకుఁ దెలియునుగదా.' కాని, యామాటకు భర్తయగు టెంపిలు జవాబుచెప్పకున్నను దనసతి నిజము చెప్పినదనియు నత్త బొంకులాడినదనియుఁ, దెలిసికొని, యత్తయగు లైటర్ దగ్గఱనుండిలేచి వెళ్ళి తనపుస్తకకోశము నొద్దకు పోయి యొంటరిగ నాలోచించుచుండెను. అంతఁ దనయల్లునిసంగతి దనభర్తతో "లైటర్" అనునామె యిట్లనెను. "తత్క్షణమే చెప్పుటకు నాకిష్టమున్నదికాని యతఁడు నామాటవినఁడని నాకుఁదెలియును. వాని మనస్సులో నేదో పిచ్చికసి యున్నది. ఏసంగతిలోను నాసలహా దీసికొనడు. నీవే చెప్పఁదగినవాఁడవు, కనుక నీవే చెప్పవలయును." చదువురాని హిందూస్త్రీ యీవాక్యములు వినినచో నింగ్లీషువారి గృహాచారములనుగుఱించి యేమనుకొనునో చెప్పఁజాలను. భరతఖండములోనున్న యత్తలెంత దుర్మార్గులైన నిట్టివారు కారని వ్యక్తమగును.

11. "ఇజబెల్ లేడీబర్టన్" ననునామె 'నుడివిన పత్నీధర్మము'లకు ప్రకృతపు హిందూసాధ్వులు దృష్టాంతములు. ఆమె 17 నియమముల నేర్పఱచెను. వానిలో ముఖ్యము లనూదితములగు. బర్టను నిజమైన స్త్రీయైనచో నామె చెప్పిన విధిరత్నములు స్మార్తనియమములకు "నకలు" గ నుండుటంజూడ పూర్వజన్మమునందు హిందూస్త్రీయై యుండనోపు. "నీగృహకృత్యములు చెలికత్తెలకుఁ జెప్పఁగూడదు. నీభర్తదోషము లొరులకుఁ గనఁబఱపఁగూడదు. అతని కే యాపద, కష్టము, వచ్చినను దోడుగ నుండుము; అతని నెవరవమానింపనీయకు. ఎవరైన నిందచేసినచో నెంతకష్టముగనున్న నక్కడనుండి వెళ్ళిపో. నీభర్తదోషము లెవరుచెప్పినను వినకు. అతని వ్యభిచారముసంగతి సుతరాము వినకు. హాటుమాటలతో గాని, పరి

హాసముచేఁగాని యతనిమనస్సు నొప్పింపకుము. నీమీఁద దప్పారోపించినప్పుడు మాఱుఁబలుకకుము. అతఁడు తప్పుచేసినప్పుడు, ముఖ్యముగ నతఁడు దనతప్పు నొప్పుకొన్నప్పుడు, నతనిని నిందింపకుము; నీవు కోపముతో నున్నప్పుడు దెల్పకుము. అతఁడు పొరపాటుపడినపు డతనికి నుత్సాహము పుట్టింపుము. అతని ప్రణయకలహములనెవరుజూడకుండగ నీమనస్సులోనె దాచిపెట్టుకొనుము. నీకిష్టములేని పురుషునిగాని స్త్రీనిగాని జూడవలదని యతనితో నెప్పుడు జెప్పవద్దు. ఆయనయందు నమ్మకముంచి యితరజనుల రహస్యములు తప్ప నితరము లతనితో జెప్పనగు. మతసంబంధములగు మాటలచే నతనికిఁ దొందర లియ్యకుము; నీవు మతానుసరణముతో నడచి నీదృష్టాంతముఁ జూపు; దైవము జన్మమిచ్చినందులకు దానిని సార్థకముఁ జేయుము; వృథాగాఁ గాలక్షేపముఁ చేయవలదు. మీయుభయుల యోగక్షేమమునకై దేవుని బ్రార్థింపుము. ఇంకనతనికిఁ దెలియనీయకయే సాధ్యమయినంత మేలుఁజేయుము మఱియేమి చెప్పను, దైవానుగ్రహము నీభర్తకుఁ గలుగున ట్లహర్నిశము నడుచుకొనుము. ప్రతిరాత్రి పరుండకపూర్వము నీవు భర్తతోఁగలసి దైవప్రార్థనము చేసి బీదలపై దయఁజూపునట్లును, నితరులకు నెమ్మదిగను, నోర్పుతోడ నుండునట్లు నీపెనిమిటికి మెల్లగ నేర్పుము. నీజన్మసాఫల్యము నొందుటకు నీదేహారోగ్యపాటవముల నెల్లప్పుడు నుత్సాహమును గలిగియుండు. అతని జాబు లెప్పుడును దెఱవకుము. అతఁడు తనంతట తాను చెప్పని సంగతినిఁ దెలియవలయునని యాస నెందకుము. అతనికి నతనివైపువారికిఁ గల వ్యవహారములలోఁ బ్రవేశింపకు. వారి నతనితో నుండుటకు నుత్సహింపుము. వారికతఁ డేమి యుపచరింపఁదలఁచినను దాని కుత్సహించి వారిని నీచుట్టములుగ నెంచి కడుగౌరవపర్చవలయును. గృహకృత్య మంతయు యథావిధినిజరగనిమ్ము. ఎప్పుడు నభ్యంతరము రానివ్వకుము" అని దీనినంతయు హిందూగృహిణి ధర్మములలో నంతర్భావము చేయనగు.

12. హిందూ స్త్రీల ఘోషాను గుఱించియు, నిర్బంధమును గుఱించియు, నొకటి రెండు మాటలు చెప్పెదను:—నిర్బంధమనుమాట బొత్తిగ పనికిరాదు. మనదేశములో స్త్రీల కట్టినిర్బంధము లేనేలేదు. భార్య, భర్తకు లొంగియుండవలయు నను సంగతి యందఱకుఁ దెలిసినది. అందఱు నొప్పినదె. ఆధర్మము శాస్త్రముచే విధింపఁబడినది. మఱియు ననాదినుండి యాచరింపఁబడుచున్నది. కానఁ దెలియనివారు భ్రమసినట్లు భార్య తనయింటిలోఁ దాను దానిసయని తలఁపదు. ఈవిషయములో యూరపుదేశీయులు చాలఁ దప్పుటభిప్రాయులై యున్నారు. జనానా యేర్పాటు క్రూరతమమనియు, దుర్మార్గతమమనియు, మీ రెల్లప్పుడు వినుచున్నారుగద. దాని నిజమెట్లున్నది? మర్యాదగల కుటుంబములలోని స్త్రీలకు నిరుగుపొరుగు వారికంటె భాగ్య మెచ్చైనచో, వారు నలుగురి కగపడక సంతోషముతో జనానాలోఁ బ్రవేశింతురు. ఇది గౌరవసూచకముగాని క్రూరముగాదు, దాస్యముగాదు. అట్లనుట తప్పు. అట్లే తప్పుతలంపు లనేకములున్నవి. వానిని శ్రద్ధతో మార్పవలయు. హిందూసంఘమునకు వెలుపలనున్న యూరోపు స్త్రీలకు మనగృహకృత్యములను గూర్చి కొద్దిగఁ దెలియును, తెలసిన దప్పంతయుఁ దప్పుగఁ దెలియును గాన మన స్త్రీలవిషయమై వారికి మిక్కిలి జాలిగలుగుట వింతగాదు. మనదేశమునకువచ్చు యూరోపు స్త్రీలలోఁ బలువురు మన స్త్రీల నిజస్థితి నరయ శ్రద్ధఁ జేయరు. చేసిన వారికిఁ దఱచుగ యథాస్థితి తెలియదు. నిజ మరయకపోవుట కనేకాభ్యంతరములు గలవు. భాష దెలియదు, విశేషైశ్వర్యము గలిగిన యూరోపు స్త్రీలు మనదేశములో నున్నను వారికి మనవారికిఁ గలస్థితిగతుల వ్యత్యయము, సుఖేచ్ఛ బద్ధకము, మన స్త్రీలతోఁ దఱచు రాకపోకలు ముచ్చటలు లేకుండుట, మన స్త్రీలకు విద్యలేమి, యూరోపు స్త్రీలతో మనవారు ముచ్చటించుటచే ననాచారమంటునని సందేహించుటలోనుగాఁగల, యభ్యంతరములను బట్టి మన స్త్రీల సంగతి నిజము యూరోపుసోదరీలకు దెలియదు. నిజమరయుట యింతక్లేశమైనను లండన్ పట్టణములో నొకదినపత్రికకు విలేఖరియై మనదేశములోఁ దిరిగిన మిస్ బిల్లింగ్టన్ అనునామె హిందూస్త్రీలవిషయమై యిట్లు వ్రాయుట చాలసంతోషముగనున్నది. "హిందూస్త్రీల స్థితిని గూర్చి యింగ్లండుదేశములో చాలదూష్యముగ వర్ణన చేయబడుచున్నది. గృహములోను, హిందువుల యాచారనడవడికల మర్యాదలలోను, నామెయధికారము విశేషముగనున్నది. మనము సామాన్యముగ ననుకొన్నట్లామె నతినీచముగను దాసిగను జూడరు. మనమనుకొన్న దానికంటె నామె యతితెలివిగలది. సమర్థుఁడగు నొకహిందువు హిందూస్త్రీలనుగూర్చియు వారిగృహములనుగూర్చియు, నిజరూపు వ్రాసిన బాగుండునని నేను బహువారము దలఁచితిని." మలయాళములోని నంబూరీ స్త్రీలను మినహాయించినచో మన స్త్రీలకు ఘోషాయనునది చాలభాగము లేదని చెప్పనగు. మలయాళ స్త్రీలకు విశేషఘోషాగలదు. దక్షిణహిందూస్థానములోనేమి యింగ్లీషురాజ్యమునకు లోఁబడిన భరతఖండములోనేమి హిందూస్త్రీలకు (ఘోషా) అంతఃపురనివాసము లేదు. ఉత్సవాదులలోను, శుభాశుభకార్యములలోను, గొప్పవారి స్త్రీలుగూడ సామాన్యముగ నలుగురి కన్నులఁబడుదురు; అది తప్పుగానెంచరు. ట్రావెన్కూరు స్త్రీలఁగూర్చి ఆనరబిల్ జె. డి. రీస్ గారిట్లు వ్రాసిరి. "మలయాళపు రేవునుండు హిందూస్త్రీల యాచారనడవడిక లితర హిందూస్త్రీలసంగతి నెఱింగిన యింగ్లీషువారి కాశ్చర్యముగ నుండనగు. ఇతరస్త్రీలు ముప్పాతికముప్వీసము జనానాలో నుందురని తలఁచెదరు. అది పొరపాటు; నిజము విచారించినచో కొద్దిమందియే జనానా నంగీకరింతురని దెలియుదురు. మలయాళదేశము మాత్రము "మినహాయించి" నచో, నింగ్లీషువా రనుకొనునంత జనానాపద్ధతి హిందూదేశములో వ్యాపింపలేదు. అంతఃపురములోనే స్త్రీలుండవలయుననియు, వెలికి రాఁగూడదనియు, హిందువులలో నిర్బంధము లేదుగాని తురకప్రభువుల యాచారమును, నుత్తరీయుల్లలో భాగ్యవంతు లవలంబించిరి. నిజమేమన, సిరి, సంపద, గౌరవము, నాధిక్యము హెచ్చయినకొలది హిందువులు తమ స్త్రీలను ఘోషాలోనుంచి తురక యలవాటు నవలంబించుదురు. మఱియు బ్రాహ్మణమర్యాద చొప్పున నతిబాల్యవివాహము, విధవలకుఁ దిరిగిపెండ్లి చేయకపోవుట, యాచరించుదురు. ఇట్టియాచారములున్న గృహస్థులు హిందువులలో మర్యాదవంతు లనఁబడుదురు. సత్కులీనులలోను, విశేషవిద్యావంతులలోను, నతిగౌరవనీయులలోను, నిట్టియలవాటు విశేషముగనుండఁగ సంఘసంస్కరణకర్తలజ్ఞానము వలన నివిగలిగినవనియు, వీనిని చట్టములచే మార్పవలయుననియు, నింగ్లీషు గవర్నమెంటువారిని వేఁడుచున్నారు."

వా. వెం. శివావధాని